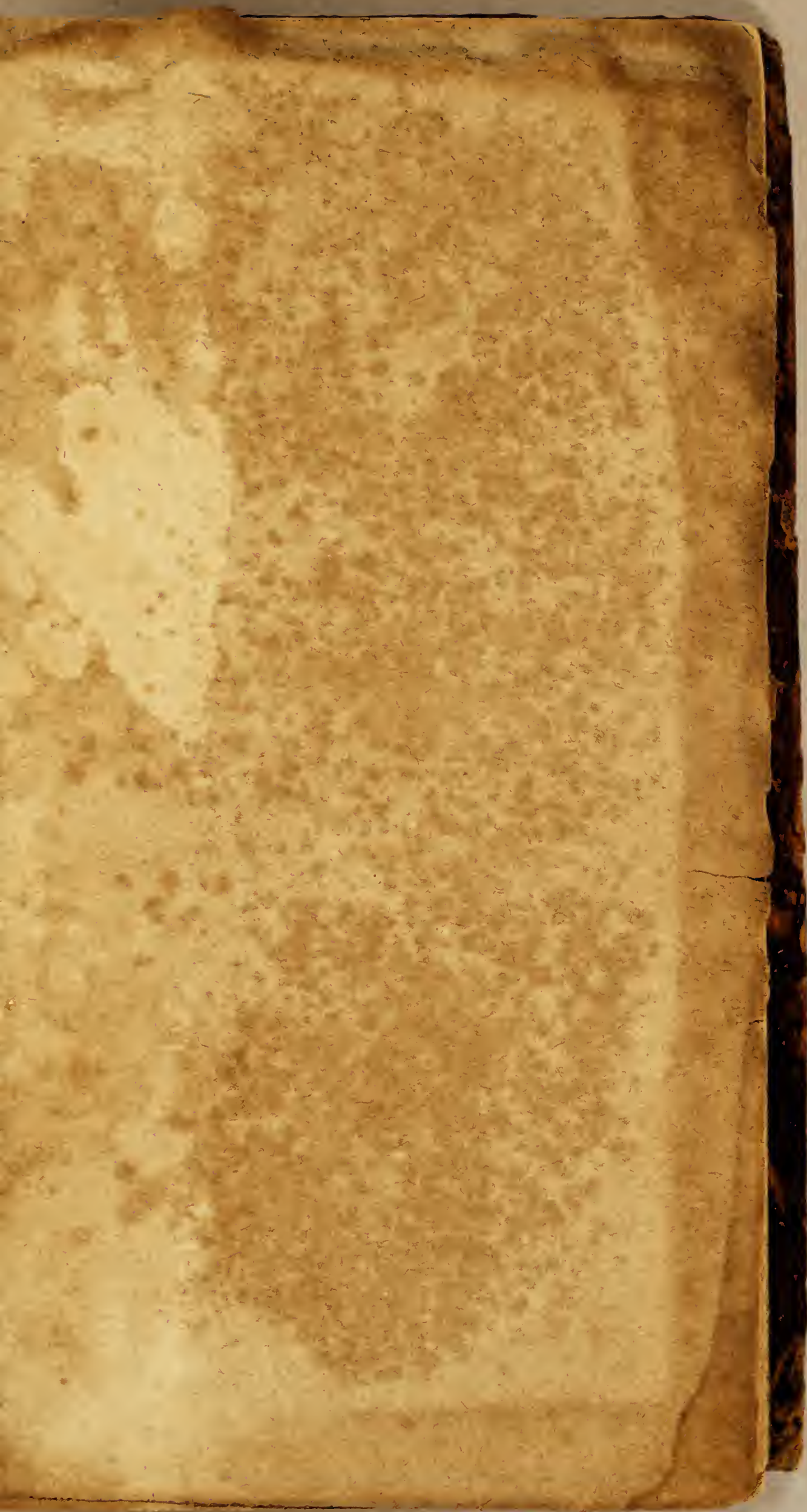
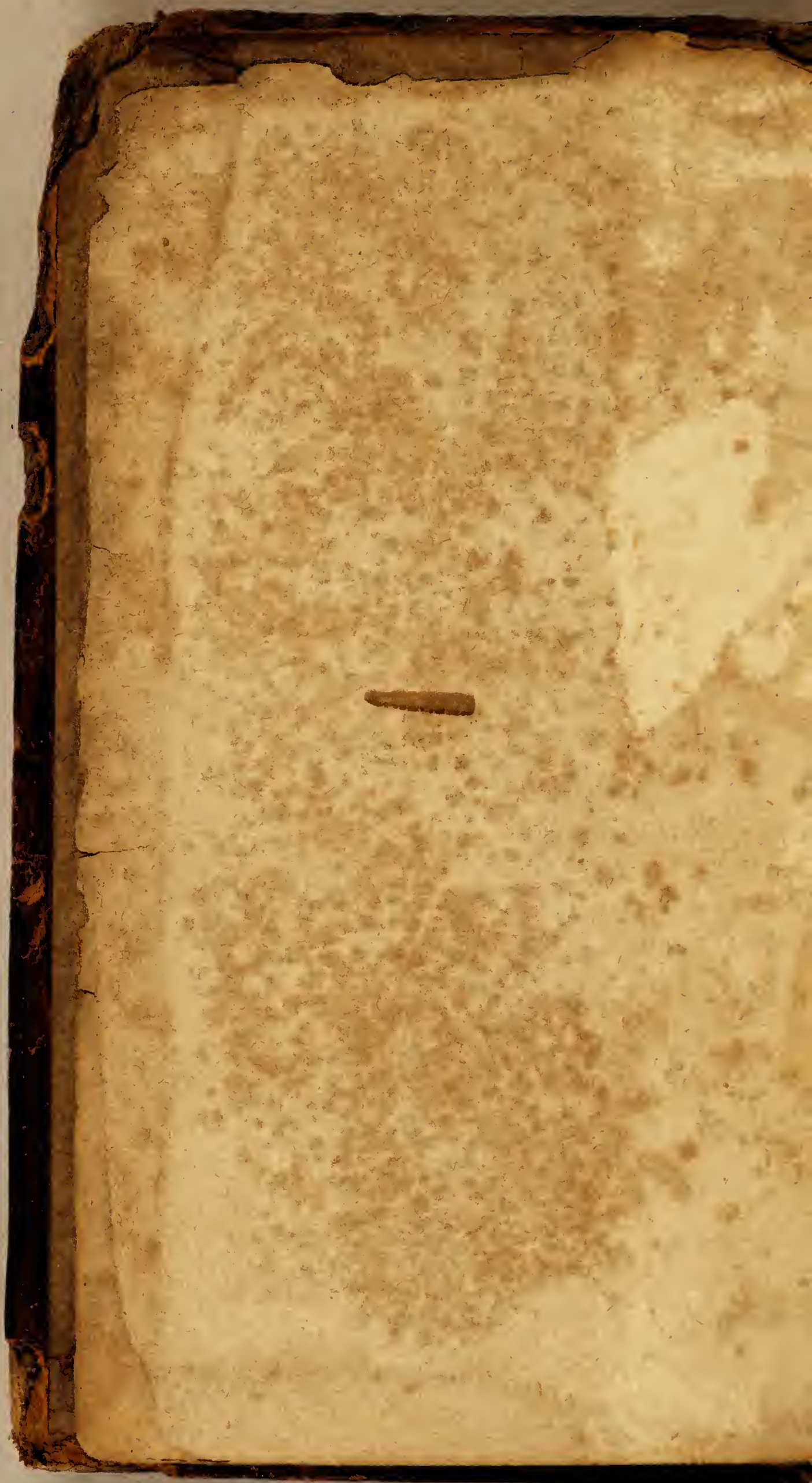


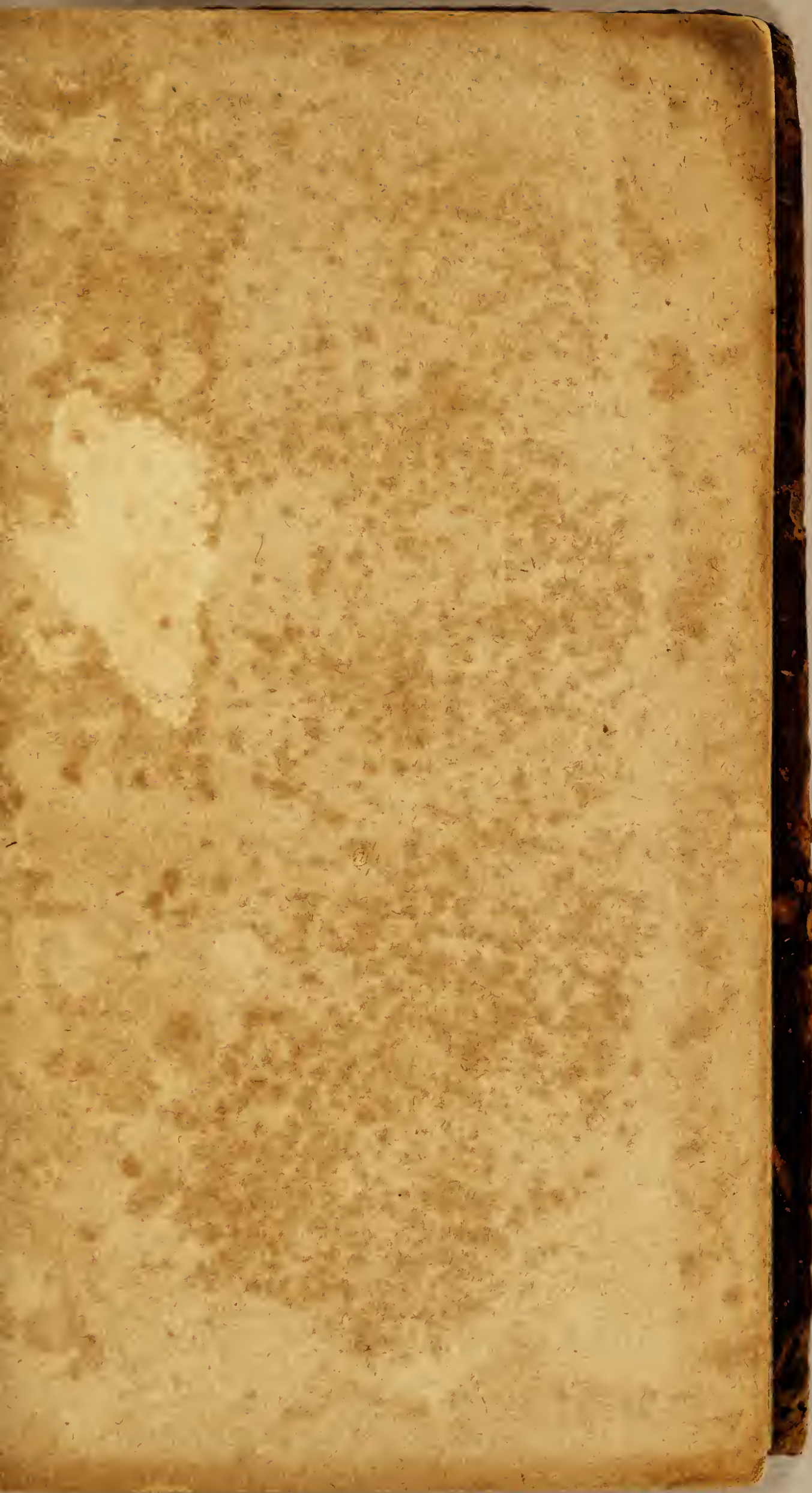
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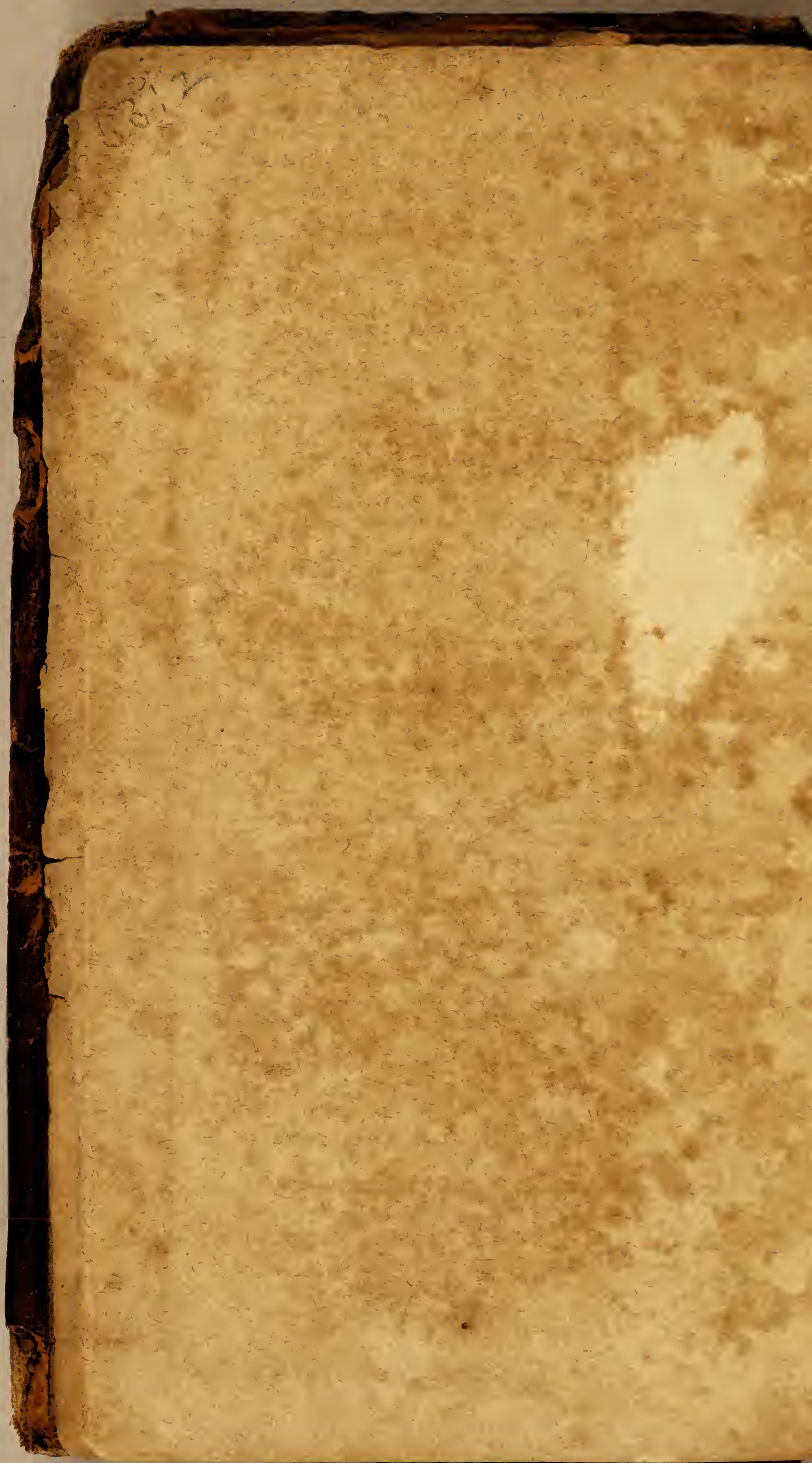


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Christ, a Christian's Life :

OR, A PRACTICAL

DISCOURSE

OF A

BELIEVER'S LIFE,

Derived FROM CHRIST,

AND

Resolved INTO CHRIST:

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF SEVERAL

S E R M O N S.

By the late Rev. JOHN GAMMON,
Minister of the Gospel, and Pastor of a Congregation in
WHITE-CHAPPEL.

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

*Col. iii. 4. When Christ who is our Life shall appear, then shall ye
also appear with him in Glory. Gal. ii. 20. Rom. iv. 8.*

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CPICB



T H E

EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To the little Flock of Christ, over whom the Holy Ghost hath made me overseer.

The Father of mercies, and God of all grace, who hath called you to his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you, and make known to you that mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all by Jesus Christ.

Beloved in the Lord,

I HAVE in some measure been acquainted with the longing desire of most of you to have these sermons published, by whose importunity I have been prevailed with to print them, against many strugglings, and much unwillingness in myself to go forwards with the work; for some of you well know how much I was set against the printing of them, and that for several reasons.

First, Knowing that there are plenty of good books, the works of worthy learned men, extant: That there was no need of my unworthy labours, *Secondly*, Knowing how little the best of books are valued by most. *Thirdly*, Knowing the scorn and contempt not only of profane and wicked persons, but many that profess great zeal for God, do condemn those principal gospel-truths, justification by Christ alone. But if persons were truly wakened, they would be of the mind of *Bellarmino*: That it will be best to rest upon Christ alone for salvation when they come to die; They will then see that they had no cause to abuse the servants of Jesus Christ, that have made it their business to exalt Christ and free-grace. *Fourthly*, Knowing my own insufficiency for so great a work, as to appear to public view. *Fifthly*, Because of many things that might be left out in the printing that was preached, I not preaching by notes, cannot remember many things which were delivered to you when the sermons were preached; but here you will find the principal heads of what I delivered, being taken from my mouth by a servant of the Lord when preached. I have done my endeavour to supply what I could that was wanting and to correct what I saw out of order; but it cannot be expected so well as it would have been, if I had wrote the sermons I had preached at length; yet finding the earnest desire of most of you to have them printed, and the many arguments you used to have them hastened to be published, notwithstanding the many strugglings I have had against the work;

The Epistle Dedicatory.

yet the dear love I bear to you, and the earnest desire I have to serve you in the Lord, hath overcome my unwillingness in this work, having received an account from several of you, the sweet comforts many of you received when you heard them preached, and have also declared how much it would add to your comfort and edification if they were printed; I hope through grace, that you will not be disappointed of your expectation. Some of you have declared that the preaching was as marrow and fatness to your souls; I hope that you will suck out some spiritual sweetness in the reading of them. As God was graciously pleased to answer your prayers, in raising me from a sick-bed, to preach these my sick-bed meditations amongst you; so I hope, through mercy, your longing desire to read them will be satisfied, in receiving that comfort you expect to reap to your souls in reading of them. What is said of money, that it answers all things to the subsistence of the body, may be much more said of Christ to them that live upon him; he answers all their wants, supplies all their needs: He that hath Christ wants not, he that hath not Christ, inherits not what he seems to have. Christ enjoyed in the soul, makes bitter things sweet, heavy things light; where Christ's presence is, darkness is made light, and sorrow turned into gladness. How precious are the enjoyments of them that have such a precious pearl as Christ is! *He is the chiefest of ten thousand*, he is a most excellent and lasting good, Cant. v. 10. *All the hid treasure of wisdom and knowledge is in him*, Col. ii. 3. What an excellent knowledge have we attained unto, that truly know Christ? How doth this transcendent worth affect your hearts, changing them into his own image and likeness? When a soul comes to have a saving knowledge of Christ, he is changed then from *Vir Terrenus* an earthly man, to *Vir Cœlestis* an heavenly man. Ignorance of Jesus Christ, causeth men to rest in shadows and in forms, in poor and low things, compared with Christ and his excellency, are all but dross and dung, so the apostle esteems them, Phil. iii. 8. It is only a real saving knowledge of Christ, can draw the heart of a vain and perishing world to seek things that are above. It is not a speculation, but an application of Christ, that brings home to the immortal soul what it stands in need of; life, light, pardon, peace, purity, righteousness, counsel, comfort, healing, deliverance, grace, glory, all flows to the believing soul from Christ, in whom all fulness dwells. The soul that lives on Christ hath a good livelihood, John vi. 51. He shall live well for ever. It is not an outside shew of religion will be to the soul what it stands in need of, as redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation, sanctification, consolation, salvation. Christ is the believers safe sanctuary in all his troubles and temptations, Isa. viii. 14.

In the following treatise, I hope you will find some discourses of the fulness of Jesus Christ, and the emptiness of the creature; for that is my desire in all my labours among you,

to get an esteem in your hearts for Christ above all other things, and that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and ye in him: I hope I need not doubt of your acceptance of those plain following truths. I do not think you will refuse it for its plain dress, but rather embrace it; for I know, as for the most part of you, that you had rather have Christ plainly preached, than such discourses that are bedeck'd with rhetorick, or painted over with curious words of arts. I may expect it will not be free from the slighting scorn, and contempt of many, that are ready to undervalue every thing but what they do themselves, and do find fault with that they cannot mend. But I have learned not to value any of their undervaluings: For if a thousand to one slight it, yet if one in a thousand get good in their souls by it, I shall bless God that ever it was printed; what evil report soever I may receive from evil men of evil minds for the work's sake; I hope I shall not value the frowns of men, as one well saith *Better to lose the smiles of men, than to lose the souls of men*; and I am sure without Christ be our life, we are poor and undone dead sinners. I know I have many enemies, who have through their envy and malice raised many false reports of me: But I desire to be an enemy to none, but those that are implacable enemies of Christ in doctrine and in practice; but tho' they are enemies, yet I freely pray for them. But I cannot expect to fare better than those that have abundantly excelled in grace and knowledge, that were both burning and shining lights, whose works praise them in the gate, and their sweet favour in Christ made known to saints and sinners; many hundreds I believe, have cause to bless God that either heard them preached, or have read their works: and yet how are these men railed against as not worthy to live, and their works to be burnt by the common hangman, as one with more zeal than knowledge declared: Because men have not received that measure of knowledge and experience as those men, they rail against them as ignorant unlearned men, their books not safe for any to read. Do not these men go quarrelling in the dark, because their brethren have received more light than they? Persons are grown to such a fond conceit of themselves and their own opinion, they will not hearken to gospel experiences; they will not so much as try those truths they revile by the scripture, but proceed with lies and slanders against those good men, though they never knew their persons, nor read their books. I am persuaded, if these persons had knowledge of those persons and truths they speak against, if the Lord were pleased to reveal himself to them, had they a taste and sight of the Lord Jesus, who reveals himself how and to whom he pleaseth, instead of biting and devouring them, and spending their time to raise evil reports of them, they would enquire after the knowledge of Christ, as the daughters of Jer. did of the spouse; *Whethere is thy beloved gone, that we may seek him with thee*, Cant. vi. 1. If

Christians would spend that time in enquiring after Christ, and receiving and imparting their experiences to each other, as they spend in contentions, and taking up, and carrying about evil reports of them that excel themselves in Godliness, they would find more peace and comfort to their own souls, and bring more glory to God, bring more souls to Christ, and would be a means for the beauty of holiness, and power of godliness to shine with a greater lustre to the world.

This is my comfort, whatever mens thoughts or words, censures or contempt are of these my poor labours, I can truly say, I seek not myself, but the exalting of Jesus Christ, and his truths and kingdom in the world. In singleness of heart I have imparted truths to you, as I learned them in Jesus: I had rather have the scorn of men for the plainness of truth, than you should have plain truths hid from you. If I am the object of worldlings scorn, so Christ be the object of your faith, therein I shall rejoice.

Behold, as I have granted your request in printing my unworthy labours, which were done chiefly at your request, and for your sake; I pray grant me some few requests, which I beg of you for Christ's sake.

First, That you seriously and carefully peruse these plain truths that I have dedicated to you. *Secondly*, That you go to the throne of grace, and there earnestly beg a blessing on what you read. *Thirdly*, If your souls receive benefit in the reading of it, ye ascribe all to God alone; it is he alone that teacheth to profit by all we read or hear. *Fourthly*, That you would study and love Christ more; let his glory be the end of your actions; you never seek your own interest better, than when you seek Christ's above all: your excellency most appears when Christ and his excellency is known to you: when your eye is singly set on Christ, then is Christ admiring your beauty, Cant. iv. 7. The single eye took away Christ's heart, then the chain of obedience ravished him also. Without a pure intention, aiming at the glory of God, to exalt Jesus Christ, there is no action, be it never so excellent in itself, is accepted of God. Hos. x. 1. Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit to himself: he weighs out his fruit to himself, he proportions his religion to himself; all being for himself, God accepts him not. Such fruit and mere emptiness is much as one before God: it is not enough that a thing done be materially good, but because God commands it, and that it is to the glorifying the Lord Jesus: He that is Alpha must be Omega, he that is the supreme good, must be the ultimate end of all things. Let all your good works fall in Christ's bosom, and centre in his glory. They that do not with a single eye look to Christ in all, they make as if there were something more excellent than Christ to look unto. Since Christ is a believer's life, from whom he receives all the good life enjoys, his life, and strength, and comfort, depend upon him for the influence of his grace and Spirit,

to have daily supplies and waterings from him, that you may continually live on him, Psal. cxix. 32. He prays for heart-enlargement to run the way of God's commandments, Psal. cxix. 173. *Let thy hand help me, for I have chosen thy precepts:* We have need of continual supplies of grace: if you be never so well furnished with divine grace, it will not be in exercise without fresh anointing, and fresh gales of the Spirit, Cant. iv. 16. *Awake, O north-wind, and come thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out; let my Beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.* Ordinances are but mediums and channels of grace; we had need to look to Christ to fill them with divine and spiritual blessings. It is not a sanctuary of ordinances will do our souls good, it is the power, glory and goings of God, in it is the life of the soul: it is the drops of the pure rivers of life above, dropping upon the soul, refreshing it in ordinances. Ordinances are dry and empty things, if the Lord Jesus by his Spirit doth not breathe upon the heart. O then lie down at the feet of Christ, and look up to him in all, above all, for all, casting ourselves and burthens upon him, that we may be supported under all our cares, fears, and temptations, and be relieved in all wants and exigencies. Do all through the influence of that Spirit that comes down from the Head, that with St. Paul, you may live, *yet not you but Christ.* Paul owned his life was bound up in Christ, Gal. ii. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*

Sixthly, The sixth request is, that your conversations be only as becomes the gospel; let not the doctrine of free grace be abused by your unholy conversation; see that ye be not of the number of those atheists, that say, let us sin, that grace may abound: let the enemies of the doctrine of free grace reproach the doctrine, and the Christians that own it at their pleasure; I am sure there are none that are acquainted with the free grace of God, can live a loose life; neither was any known that taught that doctrine feelingly, or learned it truly, that were ever known to be wicked persons. The grace of God teacheth us to deny ungodliness and wordly lusts. Indeed the notions of free grace may leave persons with un sanctified hearts and lives; but the true knowledge of it leaves so sweet a favour upon the heart, that the soul cannot willingly embrace dunghill lusts. When the soul knows the whole of his salvation is of free grace, that soul is drawn forth to love, admire, glorify and praise God, who hath done such great things for him.

Let me beseech you, let not the glorious gospel suffer reproach by your uneven conversation. You know, you that profess the truth, truths of Christ have many enemies. You had need pray earnestly to be led in a plain path, because of all your enemies: you have given up yourselves to the Lord in your external dedication, see that it appear in your conversation. The life of an holy man is, according to God, 1 Pet. iv. 6. That God, you have given yourselves up to, is a holy God, the Lord Jesus that

redeemed you, is the holy One of God : the Spirit that leads the children of God is an holy Spirit ; the covenant that you are in is an holy covenant ; without holiness none of you shall see the Lord. Then let me prevail in my request, pray live holy lives, let your conversation be as becomes the gospel only, then no matter what men say of you, you will have great peace in your own souls, Psal. cxix. 165. *Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.* It is better to be holy, than to be thought holy ; no matter if you are outwardly black, so you are inwardly beautiful.

Seventhly, Walk in love,—imitate the Lord Jesus, whose love overcame all your infirmities ; love brought him out of his Father's bosom ; love caused him to be born in a low condition, to bear our sorrows and grief ; he taught love, he practised love, he died for love, he left pledges of his love to comfort his spouse in his absence, and will shortly come and fetch all his redeemed home to glory to have their fill of love. *Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour*, Eph. v. 1, 2. These will demonstrate that you are Christ's disciples. John xiii. 35. The Lord Jesus Christ spake these words a little before his death, that they might be of the more force, and make the more impression upon the souls of his disciples, as if he should say, Remember my dying love, and let it live in your bosoms as a precept and example to love one another. And this is a certain character of love to Jesus Christ, when we love Christ's disciples for Christ's sake, not because we are of the same mind in our judgment, but because we are Christ's disciples, and bear his image ; and then you may assure yourselves, if you love upon such grounds, your love will not be restrained only to each other that walk in church-fellowship, but to all saints as saints, of what denomination soever they go under, which is much wanted in this day we live in. It is much to be lamented that persons saint themselves more by their own opinion, than by their interest in Jesus Christ. Saints should love as they are children of one Father, and in their way to heaven, and all that are in that way have union with Christ, and are members of one glorious head, therefore we ought to love one another ; why should brethren fall out by the way ? nothing doth more manifest that power of godliness is in a people, than when they love for saintship rather than for judgment. If we read the 13th chapter of the Corinthians, the apostle gives the true characters of love. The first description of it is, that it suffereth long, that is, not hasting to take revenge on them that offend them, nor rash in expressions to threaten revenge. *Secondly*, It is kind, ready to do any good office. *Thirdly*, Envieth not, is not troubled at the prosperity of others, however it go with himself. *Fourthly*, Vaunteth not itself, doth not ambitiously glory in himself, doth not labour to exalt himself. *Fifthly*, Not

puffed up, not swelling with conceits of himself. *Sixthly*, Doth not behave himself unseemly, would not do any unseemly action, nor behave himself in an unseeming manner. *Seventhly*, Seeketh not his own, hath not an eye to his own profit, as to make it his end but eyes God's glory chiefly, and the good of Zion, more than carnal interest. *Eighthly*, Is not easily provoked; though there may be passions, yet it is not governed by them, it is an evil much to be lamented: passion so governs some, as if their tongues were set on fire from hell. *Ninthly*, Thinketh no evil; he would do no evil to none, nor readily take up evil of another, to have uncharitable thoughts of him; he will not be ready to charge his brother rashly upon every report. *Tenthly*, Rejoiceth not in iniquity; he doth not rejoice in the faults of others. *Eleventhly*, He rejoiceth in the truth; he rejoiceth that truth prospereth, and that an innocent person's righteousness is cleared up. The apostle in winding up the marks of it, shews it is every way excellent; it beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things; he beareth all things, all evils he meets withal; he believeth all things good of his brother, so far as charity may not injure truth.

There be many that account themselves to have passed from death to life, which fall short of those characters of love: We may all lament we find it so cold in ourselves to them that bear Christ's name and image. I beseech you, dearly beloved in the Lord, be much in love, for God is love: To be a loving saint, is a sign of a lively saint; many waters cannot quench the fire of love.

Eighthly, Let me Beseech you in the name of the Lord, that you would set up godliness in your families; we can never expect holy assemblies while godliness is neglected in families. Children and servants not being instructed at home, is a great cause of their being unprofitable under the word preached. Godly instruction is too much neglected both to children and servants by professors in our age; I am afraid there are some that scarce a favourable word drops from their lips all the week to their family. How can it be thought that unfavourable spirits ever got good to their own souls? They that keep all to themselves, it is to be feared have got little to themselves; the good man brings forth good treasure, new and old. Let me intreat you, dear christians, whatsoever station you are in, whether parents or masters, whether children or servants, that you do not neglect private prayer twice in the day at least; if you have opportunity to pray oftner; do not slip such fair seasons.* If you neglect private prayer, do not expect to thrive in godliness; God gives his alms at wisdom's

* The mother would think the sucking child not well, if it should forsake the breast a whole day; so mayest thou think thy soul is not right, that can pass a day without craving any spiritual repast in prayer. Mr. Gurnal's *complete Christian's Armour*.

gate: And let me beseech you that are parents or governors. keep up public prayer in your families, look to it, that you are not numbered among the cursed families, that call not upon the name of the Lord. The private house is the christian's chapel of ease, to worship God in daily with his family: The church begun in a family, and is upheld still by the piety of private families. If the nursery be not preserved, the orchard must needs in time decay. We cannot expect that family to thrive in godliness, where public prayer is neglected. What praying persons might some children or servants have been, had they been called to that duty by parents or masters, when they were under their governments! methinks, if persons love their own souls, it should cause them to love and pity the souls about them, It would be a great cruelty in parents, to spend all they get upon themselves, and let their children starve. Employ some of that talent that you have got for the furtherance of their salvation: should not you be willing that they should find the way to heaven as well as yourselves? They have as precious souls as you, and if you have tasted sweetness in drawing nigh to God, will you deal so unkindly to hinder your family of partaking of the blessing with you? If you complain of your weakness in parts, or bashfulness makes you backward to this duty. I answer, it is not your weakness in parts will be any hindrance of your prayer's acceptance with God, nor will it prevent a blessing from your family; God looks at the uprightness of your hearts, not at the excellency of your expressions; but if you would study your own and families souls wants, you would as well know how to go about this duty, as you know their necessities in the world, how to go about your worldly business to maintain them, and supply their outward wants. And as for bashfulness, if your children were perishing for bread, you would put on courage to beg with them, rather than let them perish; how much more should you put on courage to go with your perishing children and servants souls to the throne of grace to beg grace for them, as ever you would have your family thrive under the public ministry, as ever you would have them in their duty toward God and yourselves, as you would have obedient children and faithful servants, as ever you would have your children and servants separated from a vain wicked world, as ever you would bless God that you were their masters or parents in a dying hour, keep up constant prayer with them in your family.

Ninthly, Let me intreat you to love the truth for truths sake; think not the worse of it because most undervalue it; let not their low esteem of the truths of Christ damp your affections to it; enquire not who is on your side, before you take it up, as the pharisees did; *Have any of the rulers believed on him?* some, if they have not the most and highest on their side, think truth not worth their owning. It is the misery of many, they never made their faith nor religion their own; what is accounted best among

men, is always best to them ; it is what men teach, that are accounted best by the most of people they most adhere to, more than they will to the truths of Christ, tho' the best man teach them. They that are most for sinners good, are not counted good with sinners ; they that preach Christ freely to the worst of sinners, are counted the worst of men : Though truth is come to a bad market, and sold at a low rate, and few buyers, I beseech you, have never the lower esteem of it, buy it as your choicest crown ; if you hold fast the crown of truth, when Christ comes, he will give you a crown of glory. Many, I am persuaded, that are convinced of the truth, do not own it, because it goes in a mean dress : Many will hold with every thing the church that they are of holds, though they know nothing aright they hold : such are for performance or omission, they will do as others do, but nothing from a right principle : Beg of the Lord that you may see the beauty and glory that is in the truths of Christ, that you may highly prize truth when you suffer the greatest reproaches and evils for owing the same.

Love truth for its own sake, honour it for Christ's sake, commend it for others sake ; follow it for your own sake.

Lastly, Let me earnestly intreat you to pray for me, that I may both in life and doctrine be a burning and shining light, that I may find the power and relish of things upon my heart that I give out to you and others, that I may be an instrument in the hand of Christ to bring many souls to him, and build up those that are brought in their most holy faith, and that utterance may be given me with a blessing from heaven upon my unworthy labours, that they may not be vain, but that I may daily see the travel of my soul ; it is God alone can open hearts, and unlock the treasury of grace in the gospel, and make known the mystery of the gospel. It is not the hand that sows the seed, but God's blessing that gives the increase. And if you would have me bear you upon my heart before the Lord at the throne of grace, pray give me a meeting oftener there, if you expect me to water you, pray that I may be watered. People little consider what good they keep back from their own souls, in not praying for their ministers : many are readier to reproach them, than to pray for them, and to rejoice in their falls, than to pray that they be upheld. How many that have excellent gifts and parts do little work for God, bring little comfort to souls ? if shining, they are not burning lights, they leave cold earthly proud hearts : I think one cause may be, they have not been earnest at the throne of grace, that a blessing may attend their labours. People may be much in admiring such ministers gifts, when the word they preach takes little effect upon their souls. Ministers have a great charge committed to them, and a great work to go through, many trials and temptations in their work, they had need be daily the subject of your prayers and pity. Your strangeness to the work, may cause their work to be much a stranger to your souls. To be a minister, saith *Luther*, is

nothing else but to derive the worlds wrath and fury upon himself. The dirt of reproach, saith one, lies no where so thick as on ministers coats. How many would count themselves happy in their ruin, that bring the tidings of peace and salvation to their souls! A miserable happiness that rejoiceth in the destruction of them that bring salvation to them: as the people would have their ministers good nurses to their souls, and good examples to their flock, as they would not have them pervert them by their error in doctrine, nor be temptations to them by their falls, they should pray hard for them, that they may neither miscarry in life nor doctrine, that God's *Urim* and *Thummim* may be with them. I hope, beloved in the Lord, you will not shut me out in your prayers, as you would have the name of Christ honoured by me, your souls well fed with wholesome spiritual food; as you would not have my enemies have the desire of their hearts that wait for my halting. Alas! I am a poor frail creature that am encompassed about, it may be with as many temptations, if not more than many others are, and I fear have less strength to go through them. Pray for me, that while I preach to others, I may not be a cast-a-way myself. It is dreadful to drop into hell from under the pulpit, but more dreadful to drop out of it into the bottomless pit. It is sad for ministers to be without the grace of God, and true knowledge of Jesus Christ, they press others upon pain of damnation, not to neglect: like one that should spend time and strength to draw water for others, and perish with thirst himself: or as one that directs many the right way, and yet doth lose his own way. As you would have me a faithful labourer in the harvest, to bring full sheaves to your souls, pray the Lord of the harvest to give me skill and strength to bear the burden and heat of the day. As you would have the word which I preach drop upon your souls as the rain, and distil as the dew and small rain upon the herb, and as the showers upon the grass, beg of God to pour a double portion of his Spirit on me. As you would have my preaching powerful, my life teaching, my sermons heaven-born, my lamp burning, my heart engaged, my talent improved, myself to spend and be spent for your souls good, pray forget me not at the throne of grace.

I shall now take my leave of you, and subscribe with my hand the reality of my heart, your loving pastor and faithful servant for the Lord's sake,

J O H N G A M M O N.

To the R E A D E R.

Christian Reader,

THE subsequent tract being sent down to me in the country, I did, as my other occasions would admit, (for I have not had time for a strict perusal) cursorily look it over, and finding to my great satisfaction such a sweet breathing in every part of it, I do joyfully recommend it to thy serious view, as a jewel not common, or easy (among the multitude of books this age abounds with) to be found: And that thou mayest know the cause that hath sent forth such precious Wine, I will give thee a brief account of the Author; tho' indeed *ex pede Herculem*, his own work portrays him, and delineates the frame of his spirit far beyond what my feeble pen can do. But being well known to me (perhaps better than any besides) I think it my duty to wait upon him to the press in this his first essay, with this just and impartial character of him—He was an holy, serious, good man, abounding with the gifts and graces of the Spirit; and every way fitted for that great work he was called to. Prayer, meditation, and the sanctified use of affliction, (Luther's three ingredients to make a gospel-minister) few had a greater share of. He was of an excellent spirit, of great faithfulness and courage, a perfect hero in the ministerial work; none of those rattle-snakes that hiss and sputter in sun-shiny weather, but durst not peep out of their holes in a winter season. This worthy champion, (for which his praise is, and will be in the gates of Sion) bore a glorious testimony in the late horrid persecution; he stood manfully to his arms, when the bulls of Bashan encompassed him about, he never quitted the field, nor flinch'd from his posts, notwithstanding the eminent danger himself and family were daily exposed to, but as one unconcerned in any terrene events, he went on in his way, in his work, and verily the Lord was with him, he crowned his labours with extraordinary success, and (as a token of his special favour) gave into his bosom a most sweet people to be a nursing-father to, whose unanimity among themselves, and fervency of love to their endeared pastor; whatever others may, I am sure cannot match in the sphere of my acquaintance. But to pass from the workman to the work—his book will exactly shew him, such an one as I have hinted. Read it but seriously over, and thou wilt be under no temptation to think me a flatterer, but think me as much too low, as the Queen of Sheba did the relators of Solomon's court. Thou wilt meet with no uncouth phrases of wanton rhetorick. But here, Oh! Here thou wilt find the refined language of Canaan, the dialect of the new Jerusalem, and such a melodious consort of divine musick, as (if the Lord set in with it) will warm thy heart, refresh thy spirit, ravish thy soul, as the spouse was ravished with the rays of Christ's glory. I am

Thy soul's well-wishing friend.

B

C. N.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THE author of these ensuing sheets desired my perusal thereof, that afterwards I would give my judgment of the same to the world, the former of which I easily granted, and have sheet by sheet, as they were done, perused the same, and suppose that thou hast them intire without typographical errors. (so far as we observ'd, they are very carefully corrected.) However, if some have escaped the Press, they must be (as is ordinary) imputed to the printer, and not to the author, or any of us who have read the original copy thereof, (as I may say for myself) with pleasure and profit.

Touching the latter, scil. commending it to thee, I most declined, partly because I esteemed it needless, in regard that the matter thereof sufficiently commends itself; and partly because I did not think myself so fit (as some fitter might be) of doing such a kind of work. However, I think myself bound in justice to say something hereof. I hope I may give this account of the author without any temptation, that I esteemed him a good christian and a gospel-minister, one who endeavoured to keep a good conscience, walk close with God in his personal and relative duties in the worst of times, of a Catholic spirit, loving all that have a liquid *Christi* in them, making faintship the ground of church communion, and avoiding all factious singularity, which beside his ministerial abilities, were the grounds of my intimatest correspondence with him. 2. As for the book itself, thou wilt (reader) if thou savourest the things that be of God, and not of man, perceive an evangelical strain of spirit throughout the whole. Ever since I knew him he was highly evangelic, but I never thought him so much as this ensuing tract shews him to be, the matter whereof was preached by him in sundry sermons, after a great fit of sickness, when we have reason to think his spirit was very warm. In some, the most excellent subject to discourse or write of, is Jesus Christ, (saith a modern author of our own.)

Austin having read Cicero's works, commended them for their eloquence, but he passed this sentence upon them, They are not sweet, because the name of Jesus is not in them. Parallel with which is that of Bernard, if thou writest, it doth not relish with me, unless I read Jesus there; if thou disputest or conferrest, it doth not relish well with me, unless Jesus sound there. This I can assure thee, reader, to the best of my remembrance, there is not a page in this book without the name of Christ, either once or more, and not impertinently or unnecessarily mentioned, at which I much wondered. Not that I am of the opinion of some, as if Christ could not be preached, if he was not mentioned in *totidem verbis*; but to be sure when he is so much mentioned, not in a way of vain tautologies, but every way according to the revelation of him in his own gospel, as I do count

he is in this book, surely then we may say, Here is a book that treats of Christ. I shall not therefore any longer detain thee from the book itself, but commend it and thee to the blessing of God, who is ambitious of nothing else, but to be

All in Christ, and nothing in self.

THOMAS POWER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THE foregoing epistle of my respected friend hath given an account of the author and his performances of this undertaking, the author himself declaring the causes and occasions of the publication thereof; that which remaineth to me is to commend the diligent attendance on the duty here exhorted unto of living unto Christ by faith; and because a fixed view of Christ, as he is revealed in the scriptures, is an instituted means whereby in and through him there is conveyed unto us strength and ability to live unto him as we ought, I shall therefore only shew the reasonableness and necessity of living to him; as it is an argument that may induce us to live upon him, who is the fountain in and through whom all ability is conveyed unto us by the grace of God, whereby we may comfortably walk with God, and live unto his praise, and our own peace. All I have to say on this account therefore may be reduced to these three heads.

1. The reasonableness. 2. The necessity of christians living to Jesus Christ. And 3. The grievous neglect hereof in the times wherein we live, endangering our ruin unless we repent and reform.

First, As to the first observation, That it is most reasonable to live unto Christ, this doth hereby appear, in that whatsoever it is that is meant by living to Christ, whatsoever is included and comprised in it, or can be understood by it, the Lord Jesus is every way worthy of it; it is all his due, and no more than our reasonable service; and this will further appear by an induction of these three particular properties, and most eminent instances of this living to Christ. *First*, As it is an act of divine honour and homage that is paid unto Christ by living to him; this he is worthy of as he is God. *Secondly*, As it is an expression of the greatest love to live to him; this he is worthy of, who died for us while we were sinners. *Thirdly*, As it consists in a resignation of ourselves to the will and disposal of Christ, by living to him; this is most reasonable also because he hath redeemed us to himself, we are his, and not our own.

First then, As it is an act of divine honour and homage that is paid unto Christ by living to him, to devote ourselves to the Lord, he is worthy of the same, in whom the fulness of the God-

head dwelleth bodily, Col. ii. 9. To make any thing the object of divine honour but God alone, is idolatry: the highest love, fear, reverence, trust and obedience that our nature are capable of performing, is the homage that is peculiarly due unto God, as he is the author of our being; the difference between the respect we owe to God, and what we are allowed to shew unto creatures, is stated in this law, that requireth us to *love the Lord our God with all our heart, our might and strength*, Deut. vi. 5. And *our neighbour as ourselves*, Mark xii. 30, 31. But the glory and homage which is peculiarly due unto God, he will not give unto another. Isa. xlii. 8. and xlviii. 11. For what else do we by performing divine honour to any? But own and acknowledge such to be God, unto whom we thereby ascribe divine excellencies, with respect whereunto, we yield that peculiar reverence which is due to God alone as such.

And seeing he dwelleth in the light which none can approach unto, 1 Tim. vi. 16. is infinite, invisible and incomprehensible in his being, it hath pleased God to condescend to give forth such a representation of himself, and such evident discoveries of his divine excellencies, as might be a meet object of divine honour, and worthy to receive the homage due from creatures unto their Creator. This was the Shekinah, or divine presence of old, evidencing itself by divine operations. Hence Jacob saith of it, Gen. xxviii. 16, 17. *Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not, and he was afraid; and he said, how dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* The Egyptians said of the plague of lice, Exod. viii. 19. that it was the finger of God. This divine presence in the burning bush obliged Moses to pull off his shoes. Exod. iii. 5. and Joshua to the like act of reverence, Josh. v. 14, 15. Unto the Lord, as prince of the Lord's host; unto this glory of God, as discovering itself at the door of the tabernacle in a cloud, Exod. xxxiii. 10. *The people bowed their heads and worshipped.* This divine presence of God dwelling between the cherubims, and filling the temple, 1 Kings viii. 10, 11, 12, 13. 27, 28, 29, 30. obliged Israel to worship towards that holy place, there being discovered the *Tekmaria*, or evident marks of the divine glory; and to pay the same respect to any other place, or to that place now, God is not there, is idolatry, Deut. xvi. 5, 6. and 12, 13, 14. 1 Kings xii. 28, 29, 30. Now proportionably unto that degree and measure of the discovery which God is pleased to make of himself to his church, as to the obscurity or clearness of it, such is the glory or defect of these dispensations, 2 Cor. iii. 9, 10, 11. 14, 18. Heb. i. 1. In this respect therefore it is that the dispensation of the gospel is so far excelling the glory of all former times, in that by the incarnation and exhibition of Jesus Christ, God is manifested in the flesh, 1 Tim. iii. 16. is most clearly, fully and gloriously revealed in the person of Christ. *No man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, that dwelleth in*

the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, John i. 18. He was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, Rom. i. 4. God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake unto our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds, who being the brightness of his glory, and the character or express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power; when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. Who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, Phil. ii. 6. Seeing it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, Col. i. 19. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge being hid in him, Col. ii. 3. And the infinite, eternal, unchangeable excellencies of God in his counsel of peace, his love, grace and mercy to lost sinners, being revealed by him, and represented in him, 1 John iii. 16. 1 John iv. 8, 9, 10. By him is glory brought to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good-will towards men, Luke ii. 14. Hence it is that all idolatry is now more inexcusable than ever, men being not left to grope in the dark, since Christ is come a light into the world, John iii. 19. John xv. 22. 24. Acts xvii. 30, 31.

So that we may conclude, as this living to him; is an act of divine honour, that he is worthy of it, and we may say, Rev. i. 5. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings, and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen. And Rev. v. 12. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and wisdom, and riches, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, John v. 23. That all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father.

Secondly, Another respect, on the account whereof this living to Christ here pressed appeareth reasonable, is, as it is an expression of the greatest love and highest esteem of him to whom we live, and this he is most worthy of, being incomparably lovely in himself, and having loved us with an infinite and everlasting love; who hath died for us while we were enemies and sinners, and washed us from our sins in his blood. And

Thirdly, As this living to Christ is a resignation of ourselves unto the disposal of another: He is most worthy of it, who hath redeemed us with the price of his precious blood; therefore ought we to honour him with our lives, seeing we are not our own, but his purchased people. So that to live to Christ in the constant performance of divine honour to him in the highest expressions of the greatest love unto him, and in the fullest resignation of ourselves unto this Jesus our dear Redeemer is entirely his due, and no more than our reasonable service.

Secondly, As it is in reason due to Christ, so it is most necessary for us. This being the fruit God expects at our hands for this great cost he hath been put unto for our redemption from

wrath to come. 2. Tit. 14. Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Rom. xiv. 8, 9. To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living, Therefore saith the apostle, None of us liveth to himself, but whether we live, we live to the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. The like we have in the text whereon the following discourse is raised, Phil. i. 20. and 21. His earnest expectation and hope was, that Christ should be magnified in his body, whether it be by life or by death; for, saith he, to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain; that is, saith Piscator in *Loc. Vita mea est occupata in promovenda gloria Christi*, my life is employed in promoting the glory of Christ. Indeed the Syriack, Erasmus, Beza, and others render this 21st verse otherwise, yet all allow this matter to be thus stated in the verse before it; nay, the whole current of Scripture manifesteth this to be the great testimony of gratitude for our redemption that God expecteth at our hands. 1. Pet. ii. 9. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into this marvellous light. Luke i. 74, 75. That being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life. This therefore being the great thing that is required, it is that for which we shall be called to a strict account before the tribunal and judgment-seat of Christ at last, and therefore is most necessary to be faithfully performed now, that we may give up our accounts with joy at that day.

Thirdly, But notwithstanding this living to Christ, is so manifestly his due, and so indispensably necessary a duty incumbent on us, yet it is most generally neglected by the most of those very people who are called, *christians*, as the open profaneness that hath overspread the nation, and the covetousness, unfruitfulness, formality and decay of first love to Christ in the generality of those of the strictest profession of religion in the land, doth too apparently manifest: And to that degree hath all flesh corrupted its way amongst us, that without a speedy and general repentance and reformation we must expect a speedy and general desolation to befall the nation; for God is the same holy, sin-avenging God that ever he was, when he destroyed the world with a flood, Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven, and is no respecter of persons, but will cause judgment to begin at his own house, 1 Pet. iv. 17. Am. iii. 2. Ezek. ix. 6. and therefore destroyed Shilo, Jerusalem, and the churches of Asia, &c. for their unfruitfulness, Isa. v. 5. Heb. vi. 8. Luke xiii. 6. Their covetousness, Isa. lvii. 17. Their loss of first love, Rev. ii. 4, 5. And all these things that are found among professors, and in the sins of Sodom. What therefore can we expect but what our Lord told the Jews, Luke xiii. 3. That unless we repent we shall all likewise perish; for none can deliver us out of God's hand, which

is stretched forth against us for our sins; nor is it like to be turned back, but encreased, until we are reformed or destroyed, Isa. ix. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. The Lord tells Israel for their stubbornness under his afflicting hand, that he would go on and set the Syrians against him before, and the Philistines behind him, and that they should devour Israel with open mouth: For all this, saith he, *his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still; for the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts.* Ver. 14. *Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush in one day,* Lev. xxvi. 18. *And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me (viz. when afflicted) then will I punish you seven times more for your sins.* The like is shewed by the parable of the pot, whose scum goeth not out of it. Ezek. xxiv. *He that being often reproved hardneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy,* Prov. xxix. 1. Thus was it with Eli's sons, 1 Sam. ii. 25. and with Israel, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. and thus is it like to be with us unless we repent.

Now this fatal neglect of living to Christ hath been occasioned very much by those diversions that have turned our minds from that fixed view of Christ which is necessary to enable us comfortably and stedfastly to live to him and walk before him, by being taken up in vain jangling about the lesser matters of religion, or filled with the cares and pleasures of this present evil world. Our best way therefore to live to Christ, is, to get our minds steadily fixed on Christ; this will change our hearts into the same image, and enable us to live unto his praise, and our own peace. *When it pleased God, (saith the apostle, Gal. i. 15, 16, 17.) to reveal his Son in me, I conferred not with flesh and blood.* 2 Cor. iii. 18. *But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,* 1 John iii. 2. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him: (And how doth he know we shall be like him?) Why, saith he, we shall see him as he is: And if a clear view of Christ in glory as he is, shall translate us into glory like unto him, then may an open view of him, tho' but as in a glass by faith, change us in a lesser measure into the same image in degrees of grace here, which shall be perfected by the beautifical vision of him into full glory hereafter.* Now it is the great and principal work and duty of all the ministers of the gospel to preach Christ Jesus, to publish and teach the glorious excellency and riches of the love and grace of God in Jesus Christ, to the conversion of sinners, and edification of the people of God; and this ought to be the great concern of all that hear the word, to hear Christ preached by such workmen as need not be ashamed, that have wisdom, skill and knowledge rightly to divide the word of God; (for who is sufficient for these things:) To conclude, that the ensuing discourse, or the sincere

endeavours of any that love the Lord Jesus Christ may be successful to induce others to live to him; and that by a constant fixed view of Christ, as he is revealed to us in the gospel, we may be made more like unto him, and more conformed to his will in all things, is the desire of,

Thy Servant in the Service of our Lord Jesus,

J. W.



C H R I S T,

A CHRISTIAN'S LIFE.

Phil. i. 21. *For me to live is Christ.*

THE Lord that *killeth and maketh alive*, that *bringeth down to the grave*, and *bringeth up*, through his goodness hath raised me up from a sick bed, and hath brought me once more among you to speak in his name: I have thought meet to offer to your considerations what were my meditations from this portion of scripture that I have named unto you.

First, What vain and empty things the highest of our enjoyments in this world are, without Christ be enjoyed in them, and exalted by us above them.

Secondly, Consider, all that we have done, or can do in our whole life, we are undone without Christ: When we come to lie upon a dying bed, there is no enumeration of works or duties will give comfort or satisfaction, if we do not savingly know Christ.

Thirdly, To consider what a poor thing head-notions, gifts, parts, knowledge, and all the learning in the world is, without Christ. If a person die with his head filled with the best of notions, and be empty of the treasures of grace and true knowledge of Christ, what a poor miserable wretch will he appear to be in a dy-

ing hour ! Alas, how poor and low a thing is health, strength, riches, parts and gifts, if we are ignorant of Christ ?

Fourthly, Consider what a blessed life they live, that live in Christ, and upon Christ : What a blessed life it is to live to Christ ! There is no life like it : and that is a believer's life.

Fifthly, Consider, and this hath been much my meditation, how terrible would the thoughts of our life past be when we come to die, since our best actions have been mixt with sin, were it not for this glorious name, the Lord hath revealed to sinners, the Lord our righteousness ? All the names of God would be astonishing to poor sinners, were it not for this, to know the Lord, a righteous God : That would be a terrible name ; Enter not into judgment with thy servant O Lord : but the Lord our righteousness ! poor sinners righteousness ! this righteousness is made mine : This makes the thought and name of Christ sweet to a poor sinner.

Sixthly, Consider there is no dying comfortably, if we have not lived on Christ. If we have not lived to glorify Christ, all things we have enjoyed will leave us wretched, poor and miserable.

Seventhly, Consider, all our reading, praying, ordinances, will be but like withered leaves, if they are not kept green and flourishing in Christ our life.

Eighthly, All the actions of our life, that are good are all in, and from, and through

Christ that glorious vine, that bear the branches, and causeth them to be fruitful.

In the verse before the text, you find the apostle resigning himself up wholly to Jesus Christ : *According to my earnest expectation, and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed ; but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.* Saith he, I have resigned up myself, I am not afraid of death, neither am I careful for this life. Whatever God will do with me, so I may but glorify him. I am not careful about this body, whether I live longer here, or whether I lay it down in the dust. Paul as it were stands a tip-toe, (saith Mr. Trap) to see which way he may glorify Christ. I am ready to die ; it will be for my profit ; it will be best for me to go to glory. I am sure it is best for me to go home to my dear Lord, there to sit with him on the throne, and receive the crown of immortal life and glory : *but for you it is best to continue here.*

Let his name be exalted, and his glory made more known to his church, however he deal with me : *I am not careful in any thing, neither am I ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also ; Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death ; that is it I live for, that is it I die for.* I would live, that I might glorify him ; I would die that I may enjoy his glory : But which way his glory may be most exalted, that way have I resigned up myself to the Lord Jesus to dis-

pose of me which way he pleaseth, so his name may be magnified in life or death : I desire nothing more than the exalting of Christ in all.

The matter contained in the words of my text, is of as high concernment, and of as great a consequence as the soul of man can be taken up with ; and indeed so great, that all things in the world are but trifles in comparison to it : What was the sum of the Apostle's desire and business of his life, to serve and enjoy the Lord Christ, ought to be the business of every one that will be everlastingly happy : This life only can bring true peace, treasures, pleasures, wisdom, grace, glory to the immortal soul of man. Whether we read the words actively or passively of his receiving life from Christ, or acting for Christ in his life ; it plainly appears in either sense, Christ is the sum and substance of a christian's life. If the Apostle's meaning was, that Christ was life to him, or that he would live to Christ ; in either sense, *Christ is a believer's life*. Some do expound it efficiently, others objectively ; I think the meaning of the words may not be mis-placed, if both be understood ; for Christ is that inexhaustible fountain and treasury of grace that a believer receives his grace and holiness from, to act for Christ : We cannot move toward Christ but as we are moved by Christ ; we must have our life from Christ, before we can live to Christ ; he is the fountain from whence the believer hath his life ; the sun from whence he hath his light and glory ; the full treasure of grace

from whence a believer receives a holy heart and life.

He that is the image of the invisible God, renews them by his grace in that image: he purgeth conscience with his blood to serve the living God the Lord Jesus; being formed upon the heart, the desires and delights of the heart are changed, the bent and bias of the heart is carried after Christ: it is Christ must kindle the holy fire upon the altar of the heart, before the believer can act from a true zeal for God.

So whether the words be taken disjunctively from the verse before, That he would magnify Christ, because he had received his life and salvation from Christ: He would magnify the efficient cause of his life, whom he was united to. Or whether conjunctively, He would live to glorify Christ, as he had resolved in the verse before; in either sense this is plain, The Apostle's heart was wrapt up in Christ more than any thing in this world.

There are many precious truths to be sucked out of this blessed portion of scripture: But I shall only through God's assistance, draw from the words this point of doctrine:

That a true believer desires not life, nor the things of life, whatever they are, no further than he may glorify and enjoy Christ in them.

Or thus, *The aims and end of a believer in life or death is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ: Or, Christ is a christian's life.*

I. By way of explication, wherein Christ is a believer's life : or how a believer is thus wrapt up in Christ.

II. Shew the reasons why they are so.

III. Apply the whole.

There are four things wherein a person is chiefly concerned as to life.

First, His dependency upon his life : Ask a man to do any thing, yes, saith he, if I am alive or in health.

Secondly, In our natural actions : If a man eat, drink, put on cloaths, take physick, food, or any thing, it is that he may live.

Thirdly, Take life for the comforts of life : A man's life is a burthen to him, when his comforts are gone ; a believer's life is a burden to him when he does not enjoy Christ.

Fourthly, For the aim and end of life : Persons that are tractable and industrious desire to live here, to be useful in their places they serve their generation ; so a believer desires to live for this end, to serve the Lord Jesus, and to glorify his holy name.

First, To take the dependance upon life : James corrects the manners of them, that said, *I will go into the city, and buy and sell* ; they should have said, *if the Lord will we shall live and do this or that* : So a believer living depending on Christ, saith he, in myself I am a poor dead sinner ; I am dead to myself and in myself ; but I depend on Christ for life, I depend on Christ for wisdom, for righteousness, for sanctification, for renewed strength, I live up-

on him for all: For I am dead, I am dead to the law, I have no action to meet the law with, nor the law hath no action against me; I am dead to sin as to the life of it, and to its condemning power, and to its malignity and guilt; and I am dead to the world, I depend on Christ saith the apostle, *that Christ might be all in all.* Alas! what can I do, all my suits are ended in law: it is life we depend on for the enjoyment of our friends; Oh it is Christ for all, saith the apostle, *ye are dead*, what then? *your life is hid with Christ in God*, Col. iii. 3. Ye are dead, ye are crucified with Christ; dead to your own righteousness. An unbeliever, whatever good he doth, exalts himself and his own righteousness; but what good a believer doth, is to have Christ's righteousness exalted; he saith no more I but Christ; but one ignorant of Christ, sets the crown of all he doth upon his own head; *I fast, I pray, I give tithes*, saith the Pharisee; but when a soul knows Christ, no more I, saith he; *you are dead*, but *your life is hid with Christ in God*; what then? *when Christ our life shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory*: The believer is wrapt up in Christ living, wrapt up in Christ dying; if it were possible, a believer could be separated from Christ, he would be lost and undone for ever; what a poor sinful naked creature is he? No, saith the apostle, *you are dead*, and where is my life? safe enough in Christ, my life is hid with God in Christ: When shall my life appear? Why, *when Christ who is our life shall*

appear, we shall also appear with him in glory. The saint lives upon Christ; when he dies, he dies in Christ, when raised up, is raised up by Christ, clothed with Christ's righteousness, when Christ who is our life shall appear, &c. A saint cannot be separated from Christ, but shall appear with and in Christ; all the formalists, legalists and moralists in the world shall appear at the great day, but it is without Christ; you know a man cannot speak, act, nor do any thing when his life is gone: So saith the apostle, as you are dead to the law, dead to sin, and dead to the world, so you are dead to your own righteousness; when Christ who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory; you shall not go one step further than Christ goes, you are members of his body.

My friends there is a great difference between a man hearing and praying, and knowing Christ only by reading; and a saint living upon Christ in every duty, in every affliction, living upon him in life, living upon him in death: saith our blessed Lord, John vi. 9. Your fathers eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead; they depended on the manna for life; but he that eats this bread shall live for ever, (as if he had said) you that depend on any thing below me shall die: when persons live on any thing below Christ, they have dead souls living, and damned souls dying: If any depend on me as the living and immortal food of their souls, they shall live for ever; your fathers eat manna, and are dead; Ordinances perish with us, du-

ties perish with us, and all below Christ will perish; the believer's all is to have Christ in them; Jesus Christ the bread of life that came down from heaven: *I am the living bread, that came down from heaven, if any eat of this bread he shall live for ever!* and this bread the Spirit of the Lord in the word reveals to the soul, and the believing soul lives by it for ever; it is the Spirit of Christ that reveals and applies to the believing soul the righteousness, grace and blood of Christ, to justify and cleanse them from all unrighteousness, and make known to them, *that their name is written in the book of life*; the knowledge of which doth draw forth a believer's heart to depend upon Christ for daily strength to exercise grace in every condition. Saith the apostle, Phil. iv. 12. *I can do all things*; Paul, you are a brave man indeed, what can you do? *I can do all things, I know how to want, and how to abound*; you hear me speak, what I can do, pray don't mistake me, I depend on Christ for it; *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me.* The believer lives through Christ: You may see a natural man praying, a natural man hearing or performing a duty; but this man depends on his own strength and on duty; and you may see a believer in duty, and it may be the natural man hath greater parts and finer expressions than the believer; but the believer lives on Christ for all, and the other on himself; saith the believer, *I can do all things*

*through Christ that strengtheneth me; he would have Christ in all, he would have Christ foremost in all; so that a believer is girt with the strength of Christ: Persons may preach, others may hear, pray, discourse: we may have fine matter, curious divinity wrapt up; but if Jesus Christ is not preached to poor souls and depended upon, it is all nothing; what can this poor creature do when he comes to die, and look death in the face, that strong champion, that king of terrors? he cannot see him but in great horror and fear. A formal christian, that strives to speak fine words, have fine expressions, learn something by rote; they can dispute of religion, therefore think they are brave christians; but comes a temptation or a trial on them, they know not how to go through the battle; but take a real christian that is meaner in expressions, that lives on Christ, and is girt about with the strength of Christ, how does he go through the battle? 1 Sam. xvii. What armour was there put on to go out against that mighty champion? That which girt him with strength was the glorious name of the Lord; the men of Israel, though men of war, were afraid; but comes David without armour, and he would encounter him; vers. 45 *Then said David to the Philistine, thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts: David had made the Lord his strength, he was girt about with the strength of the Almighty Lord; the name of Jehovah**

was the breast-plate he put on; but the men of Israel that were great warriors, were afraid to meet this champion: so persons that have been great disputers, great discourses, persons that have been great in knowledge in the letter, shall be afraid to meet death that great champion: when a weak believer that hath made Christ his life, shall go through the battle with courage; so, I say, a believer depends on Christ for life, for the life of grace, for the life of righteousness, being girt about with the strength of the Lord.

Secondly, Take life for the actions of life: while a man lives, he acts; when a man is dead, he cannot act; saith the apostle, first negatively, and then affirmatively, none lives to himself, none dies to himself; and then affirmatively, *living or dying we are the Lord's*, Rom. xiv. 8. So if we ask a natural man, why do ye as a natural man, why do you eat, drink, put on cloaths and work? that I may live: and if we ask a christian, why do you pray, hear, wait on God in ordinances? O that I may live on Christ, enjoy Christ: *You see me* (saith Paul) *live*, as you think, but you are mistaken, *I do not live of myself, it is Christ that lives in me, and the life I live is by the faith of the Son of God*, Gal. ii. 20. *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live*; I am dead, yet I live; I am dead to the world, yet I live in Christ; I am a dead condemned sinner by the sentence of the law, yet I live in the righteousness of Christ; I am dead to my own righteousness, to my own

works, but I am alive in Christ; *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*; though I am dead to sin, I am alive to Christ; thou I am a dead sinner, I am a living saint; I am pardoned in Christ, beloved in Christ, made alive through grace in Christ, clothed with the righteousness of Christ; therefore I live tho' dead, as if a man should say, I am sentenced, yet I am a man absolved; I am a man dead in the eye of the world, yet I am a man acquitted, here is my pardon; so saith a believer, the law condemns me, the law judges me, but I am alive in Christ, pardoned in Christ, now law thou hast nothing to say to me.

Well but Paul, do you live? you have got your pardon, will you live now to yourself? nay, saith he, do not mistake me, though you hear me say, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*; I do not say, I am pardoned and absolved to live to myself; no, my life is none of mine; though you see me a living saint, yet I have my root in Christ; *it is not I, but Christ lives in me*: when I was a Pharisee it was I, then I prayed, I repented, I humbled myself, I did this or that, I lived zealously to the law; but now it is no more I, though I do the action of a man, as before, I spake as the Pharisee, I did so and so in myself; but now it is changed, now it is in Christ all; before it was in my own righteousness, now Christ's righteousness; before it was my duty, but now it is Christ; Christ liveth in me, Christ reigns in me, Christ

all in all; therefore not I, but Christ; therefore look not on me; do you hear me pray, reach, do any action, *it is no more I, but Christ in me, and the life I now live is by faith in the son of God.* If a natural man eats, drinks, put on cloaths, it is that he may live: but all that I do, is that I may enjoy Christ: some poor creatures think when they have done some duties, they have done enough to justify them; but if they have not Christ their life, they will appear in as bad a state as the profaneſt wretches on earth: but I put on Christ to be by wisdom, righteousness, ſanctification; in all my duties I am putting on Christ. It is a hard matter to turn persons from profaneſs; but when they are turned from profaneſs, and reſt upon their reformation, it is an harder matter to turn them to Christ: now all the actions of a believer are ſtill that Christ may be his life, acting in Christ and for Christ.

Thirdly, Take life for the comforts of life: what is man's life to him, if his comforts have taken their leave of him? ſo it is with a believer; ſaith he, if I cannot enjoy Christ, I have no comfort in praying or hearing, I have no comfort, but as I meet with Christ: what are ſabbaths or ordinances? though I uſe them I cannot rejoice in them, till I meet with Christ; he is my comfort; when he ſhines on my ſoul, then all goes well with me: *He is the health of my countenance,* ſaith David, *Pſal. xliii. 5.* How do ſaints return mourning and ſorrowing, and what a ſorrowful ſtory will they tell us, if they

have not met with Christ in an ordinance? formal professor, he is content, if he hath been at an ordinance, whether he meets with Christ or no: but come to a believer, ask him how doth go with you? saith he, I have waited on God (and I bless God that he hath brought me to wait on him) but I have not met with God and he sorrows and mourns with the spouse; *called, but he gave me no answer, I could not hear one comfortable word from him, Cant. iii. I went to the watch-men, but I could not find him.* Oh! what sorrowful stories will believers tell if they do not meet with Christ! if I could meet with him then should I rejoice; though you may see me perform duties, what is this, if I do not meet with Christ, and have him shining upon my soul? thus take life from the comforts of life, and the believer hath no comfort when Christ withdraws; when they come from an ordinance where they have met with Christ, they will come leaping like an hart. Oh I met with him whom my soul desired! and that is to make Christ our life, to depend on Christ, and in the actions of all our duties draw life from Christ; and then our souls have no comfort in ordinances without Christ: so therefore the spouse invites Christ very friendly for she knew, that if she had not enjoyment of him she should have no comfort; she invites him in Cant. vii. 11, 12. *Come my beloved, let us go forth into the fields, let us lodge in the villages, let us get up early to the vineyard; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape ap*

ear, and the pomegranates bud forth ; there will give thee my loves. Oh come, saith she, my beloved, let us go forth ; if I go without thee, I shall have no comfort in my walk : Lord Jesus, saith a believer, come in this ordinance, come in this duty, reveal thy grace and righteousness ; without that I have no comfort : Come, my beloved, let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish : I am sure if I have not thy presence, I shall have a dead and dark time, a dismal walk of it : Come Lord Jesus in the revelation of thy grace in my heart, then will my soul thrive in grace, then shall I receive comfort.

If I have but the buddings of grace, if I have thy presence, I shall make a good construction of it ; if I have but a little grace and Christ's presence ; I can rejoice in a little grace ; A little grace when Christ appears, is more to a believer, than a strong faith when Christ withdraws : The spouse would not bring discomfort to herself ; Come let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grapes appear ; if there be but the least grace in my soul, what will you do ? there will I give thee my loves, there will I give thee my delights, there will I embrace thee with open heart, with warm affections ; there will I give thee my praises, there will I exalt thy name : Come let us see whether the tender grape appear and the pomegranates bud forth ; see how my soul thrives ; let me take comfort though there be but the least budding forth of grace ; though I have but a dram of

grace, let me have thy presence; there will give thee my loves: First, my soul shall have heart-joy, and be full of delight. Secondly, Then will I give thee the glory of thy grace. Thirdly, there will my soul be endeared to thee. When thou art present the very buddings of grace will be sweet: The strongest believe cannot take comfort in his graces till Christ appear in the manifestation of his love to the soul.

Fourthly, Take life for the end of life. The end I live for, pray for, hear for, is, that I may enjoy Christ. My friends, pray look to the end of your actions, and see that your aim and desire in all, is to glorify and enjoy the Lord Jesus; for it is but a few days, and you will come to your last day; a little time, and you will have time no more; a few minutes before you will draw your last breath; a few Sabbaths and you will have no more; and whatever you have done, if you have not made Christ your life, you are undone for ever. That is an excellent question the Lord Christ puts to the multitude, Mat. xi. 7. saith our blessed Lord concerning John, *What went ye out into the wilderness to see, a reed shaken with the wind?* John that had preached of the coming and appearing of Christ, there was abundance of people flocked about him to hear him, as if they would all have been his converts: But alas they did not know him, nor wherefore they went after him. Many poor sinners seem to be taken with the ministers, and ways of God for a time, but they do not know why not.

wherefore; as if the Lord Jesus should say, If you are only taken with his preaching as a man, and the words of his mouth, you will but see a *Reed shaken with the wind*: If a person goes to hear the best man upon earth preach, a man of the greatest fame and name, and goes merely for his learning or eloquence, or to hear some new thing, alas, you see but a *Reed shaken with the wind*, a poor mortal man, a poor earthen vessel; the best of ministers and christians, when under temptations, are but *Reeds shaken with the wind*; but if you come out to hear Christ preached, to enjoy Christ, to meet with Christ, and can say I come to hear Christ crucified and preached, Christ's righteousness revealed, then indeed this is the aim and end of a believer: But saith Christ, *What came you out for?* we may say to many professors, What come you out for? notwithstanding the means you have had, the mercies you have enjoyed, you are in the old way that you were in; how blind and ignorant are most of the doctrine of faith in Christ, of that doctrine that alone will save them, of that righteousness that will save them in the day of battle? Some are taken with one thing, some with another; some to get notions in the head to maintain disputes: But few come to enjoy Christ, and meet with him; but what went you out for, O believer, to enjoy Christ? and if Christ is not your aim and end in every duty and sermon, what a sad disappointment will you meet with at last! Will you not do

that in spiritual action, as in a civil action. You eat, you drink, *that you may live*, saith Christ, Mat. vi. 25. *Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, nor yet for your body, what you shall put on: is not life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* So I say, is not Christ more than life? Is not Jesus Christ more than all the things that appertain to life? So saith a believer, I do all that I may get Christ. So much for those four things in the explication concerning life.

The next is, the reason why a believer desires to enjoy Christ.

First, Because of that union there is between Christ and every believer. As there is an union between a man and himself, so is there union between Christ and a believer: You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God: it is not I that live, but Christ lives in me: I am not on my own bottom; I am not a man living of myself; they that are joyned to the Lord are one spirit: Christ is made my own: he is made to me wisdom, righteousness sanctification and redemption: Christ and I am one, I am a member of his mystical body, so that wherever I live, I live in Christ, and Christ in me, and I live to Christ. A believer is the very image of Christ's goodness, the very impression of Christ's mercy, the pledges of Christ's love. Saith a believer, I see Christ's conquests is my conquests, his life is my life, his righteousness my righteousness, his victory my victory. I see him dead for me, risen for me, at God's

right-hand for me, appearing in glory for me, raising me up at the last day, John vi. 44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him ; and I will raise him up at the last day.* There is such an union between the dust of a believer in the grave and Christ, that he will raise him up in a close and near union, his body like Christ's glorious body : Saith Christ, though a believer dies, there shall none of his glory be lost ; the grave is a perfumed bed, to take a sweet nap, till Christ calls in the glorious morning of the resurrection, then he will raise up every crum of his dust, there shall none of him be lost ; for there is such an union between Christ and a believer, that a believer may meet death and not fear : Death is but a messenger of peace to you, tho' he is the king of terrors to most of the world : he comes with an angel's face to the believer, tells you sweet news ; tells you, you must go to your beds of dust, where you shall rest in peace for a time, and then be raised up to glory ; as we do our children, wrap them up in their swaddling cloaths for the night, and dress them fine in the morning : Death might say, come you are only to go to your bed of dust, and in the morning, when you awake, the bridegroom will come and attire you ; here you are desiring and longing after Christ ; you would have more of God, more enjoyment of Christ, more comfort in your spirit : well, you shall have it in the other world. It is true, Christ will raise up the wicked to judge and condemn them.

Union with Christ causes the soul to cry out, *O for me to live is Christ*; O let me live to thy glory, Lord; O let not a moment of my life be without the enjoyment of thee! What is the preaching of the word, why are the ambassadors sent forth, what are a multitude of mercies, if I do not enjoy Christ? O that I may magnify Christ, glorify Christ, saith a believer, that is it I press after more than any thing I here enjoy.

Secondly, A believer's desire is, that he may live to enjoy Christ, because of the blessed supplies he hath from Christ; saith the Prodigal, *In my Father's house there is bread enough*; O saith the soul, my grace, and peace, and comfort, and righteousness, and joy, is all from Christ, saith the Psalmist, *He led me in the paths of righteousness, and caused me to lie down in green pastures*: O saith the believer, it is from Christ alone that I have supplies of grace, of peace, of strength: Saith Austin, I wish I had seen three things, That I had seen Rome in its glory; that I had seen Christ conversing with men; and that I had seen Paul, and heard him preach! but, saith another Father, I desire to see the king in his beauty, the Lord Jesus Christ in his kingdom of glory. Many have spoke of him, yet never received grace from him; but to have supplies from Christ, to be watered from him, that a believer desires.

Thirdly, A believer's desire is to live to Christ, because all means and mercies are all

too low for a believer without Christ: Ah, with the poor soul, what is the ordinance but dry well, if I have not Christ! what is my life, my friends, my comforts, without Christ! It was asked one, where lay her jewels, my jewels are in my husband and his conquests. Another, where lie your ornaments? my ornaments are my two sons. But ask a believer, where are your jewels? my jewels are in Jesus Christ the pearl of price; ask another believer, where are your ornaments? O it is in Christ, I put on Christ, I wear Christ, I enjoy Christ, Christ is my ornament: ask another, where is your treasure? in the unsearchable riches of Christ, Ephes. iii. 8. *Unto me who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I shall preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ*; there is a believer's riches: Now the world is too low a region for a believer to live in, were it not that he enjoys Christ in it; meat drink and honors, are too low for a believer to live on; but to enjoy Christ in all, is that which he aims at. I hope that I may say, that it is your earnest desire to enjoy Christ; and that any thing below this would have been too low an end for you; in your earnest desires for me to be restored to you, and to have me among you once more; to see me in the flesh only, was too low an end; but your end I hope was that you might enjoy Christ: That I might be spared to preach salvation in Christ to you, what

your souls had formerly tasted of: The Lord wiped away your tears, and took away your sorrowful spirits, O that you may meet with Jesus Christ whom your souls longs for, and long to hear from! O that he that is the life of saints, may come with quickening life to your souls, that you may know your aim and end was, that you might enjoy Christ: The Lord hath heard your cries, and the Lord grant your weeping and sorrow may be turned into joy while you live, and that we may meet together before the throne, where you shall have your tears wiped away.

Fourthly, The fourth reason is, the endeared love of Jesus Christ constrains a believer to desire nothing in this life, but what they may enjoy Christ in: O saith a believer, Lord let me die in thy embraces, rather than to live with the hiding of thy face; I had rather die in thy arms, than to live with thy arms clasped against me: *The love of Christ constrains me,* as 2 Cor. v. 14. Friends, have you tasted of the love of Christ, and can you desire any thing that you do not enjoy Christ in? What a poor heap of nothing is all in the world without Christ? A saint will tell you if you ask him, that he never lived a good day while he lived without Christ; why the love of Christ is shed abroad in his heart, for the *Love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:* Saith the apostle, *The love of Christ constrains me; why, if one died for all, then were all dead in sin; what shall we do then,*

that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again? When a soul by faith sees a dying Christ; methinks he should say, *The love of Christ constrains me*: He lived in love, and taught love, he died in love, and sits at God's right-hand in the infiniteness of his love, to intercede for his redeemed ones: Saith the apostle, *The love of Christ constrains me*. If we ask some, why do you so long after the enjoyments of Christ? O says the soul, the love of Christ! The love of a bleeding, dying Christ, constrains me! How lovely are his embraces! He hath called me, loved me, washed me a dead sinner, a wretched sinner: O the *love of Christ constrains me*! I am in a strait! I would not ask for life, if I might not enjoy Christ, not Christ only as he was king of the Jews, as he conversed here on earth, but a crucified bleeding Christ. Paul goes through the world as a man minding nothing: I don't know any man after the flesh, nor I do not regard what man saith: No, nor I do not know Christ as he came of the stock of the Jews; but I know Christ as my Redeemer, and that he died for me. He goes through the world as a man that hath lost a rich pearl, he goes looking for that pearl, so that he minds nothing else. But if I could find this pearl, it is the *love of Christ, it constrains me* to live to him: I go through the world taking notice of nothing else, Gal. ii. 20. *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now*

live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me; who loved me a wretched sinner, who loved me an undone sinner, who loved me a condemned sinner, who loved me a dead sinner. O the love of Christ constrains me, that if I live, let me live in him, let me live to him! O how can I live without him! O stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love, Cant. ii. 5. The love of Christ constrains a believer; it is not the law; it is not because else I shall be damned without him: no, no, if I do duties, enjoy Sabbaths, it is all nothing to me without Christ.

Fifthly, A believer fears nothing more than the withdrawals of Christ; of all the tidings and news that can be brought to him, nothing does he fear so much as Christ's withdrawing from him; he fears least this sun should withdraw, that he should see a dark day; though Christ will never be gone totally, yet he fears the hiding of his face.

Sixthly, A believer hath a new principle, a principle of grace, the kingdom of heaven within him, that he cannot live without Christ, the new creature, the new principle, is Christ possessing the heart, and when Christ possesses the heart, it puts all things at arms length; so Christ may be enjoyed, Gal. i. 16. *I conferred not with flesh and blood,* when God revealed his Son, then I was off of my old principle; I did not confer with flesh and blood, with fleshly principles; I was not only off from my own

righteousness, my own works, my own prayers and duties, but I come to live upon Christ, I come to have a new life within, a new glory revealed to my soul; I come to live upon Christ, to drive a new trade for heaven. When once the Lord revealed Christ to me, I conferred not with flesh and blood: now conferring with flesh and blood is the ruin of many souls. First, Take conferring with flesh and blood for the world, and all the enjoyments of it, how many turn their back on Christ, and ruin their souls for the love of the world? Secondly, Take flesh and blood for all the performances and duties that persons can do, when persons take this for their righteousness, how do they split their souls on it? When Paul was a Pharisee, he thought his own duties would save him, but when Christ was revealed to him, then saith he, *I count all things but dung and dross that I may win Christ*; one that was righteous, a praying Paul, one that had enough to carry him to heaven as he thought; alas, saith he, all this was but flesh and blood when I came to know Christ.

Thirdly, Take believers with what they have to oppose them, take believers under their doubting, then they will consider what they have of their own to help them to heaven; but saith Paul, *I conferred not with flesh and blood*.

The 7th reason, The believer by faith hath found Christ the pearl of price, he hath found enough to live upon: the merchant goes seeking goodly pearls, but when he hath found the pearl of great price, he sells all to buy that

pearl. Mat. xiii. 46. *Who when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.* He was seeking goodly pearls: there are many good things that persons seek, but not the good; I confess they are goodly pearls. Praying is a good duty, hearing is a good duty, the Lord's supper and baptism are good duties, and they are the believer's privilege, and are not to be omitted. But Christ is the precious pearl, the pearl of great price: There is not one of these pearls will open the kingdom of heaven, or give you access to the throne of grace, or crown you with everlasting glory. The foolish virgins had these goodly pearls, but not the pearl of great price: they went along with the wise virgins, they were called virgins, they were without spot, but when the bridegroom came, they wanted the pearl of price; when Christ came, they cried, *Give us of your oil*; if they had but one dram of grace, they had entered in with the bridegroom, but we see they were shut out. Many go through the field of the gospel, and take up many goodly pearls; praying, hearing and fasting are goodly pearls, but when the soul comes to find Christ, to know him, he sells all for that pearl of price: Sell them, how? does he part with his duties? no, no; does he neglect praying, hearing and other duties and ordinances? no, but he sells them, as if a man should bind up all his goodly pearls together, and give them all for one pearl of great price. So a man sells all his duties and performances,

as that which doth nothing in point of justification, but all for to glorify that Jesus Christ, that precious pearl of price. He sells his sins and his righteousness too; many think if they part with their sins, they have found the pearl of price; it is a good thing to turn from sin, but truly there must be another turn; you must turn from your own righteousness too, as to resting on it, and trusting to it. Many are troubled for these goodly pearls, and say, O if I could but pray as some can, I should have a great deal of comfort; if I could mourn as I see some do, I should be encouraged to come to God, in hope he would pardon me; these are goodly pearls, but there is a pearl must brighten all these; the blood of Christ must wash away the filth of these tears, and the guilt of your duties, and make you clean, or you are undone for ever; for these pearls, though they go through the world, they will not go in Emmanuel's land, not one drop of your own righteousness in heaven. Phil. iii. 8, 9. *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.* And be found in him: all that is done by a believer on earth, is to bring forth fruit to God as a meet inheritor of the kingdom of heaven; as one made

holy and blameless, and sanctified to bring forth fruit to this glorious Christ. But is this fruit once to be mentioned in the kingdom of glory, as the cause of our being glorified? it is not there, Lord I have prayed, or I have been at the house of God, or I have fasted; no, if that had been, might not the foolish virgins have entered into heaven as well as the wise? But it is to have this name on us, the Lord our righteousness; it is what Christ hath done, you being found in him, what he hath performed, what he is, that believers shall be, as being members joyned to their head. Well, have you found this pearl of great price, though there be not such great enlargements, such great gifts? And do your souls wrap up yourselves in this righteousness of Christ? And do you lay hold on him to be wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption to you? Hath God brought you off from your own bottom? Do you no longer stand on your own legs? Do you trust to nothing that you can do? What if you could pray as an angel, *the heavens are unclean in his sight, and the angels be charges with folly.* Though praying, praising, hearing, reading, are duties, yet when the soul finds not Christ in them, they are broken cisterns; but when thy soul hath Christ, there is faith, love and delight in the soul, rejoicing in God, admiring the wonders of his love. Alas, to think that outward duties make up a christian's happiness, then how often would a believer's comforts fail him? for how often are

we at a loss here, and non-plust here? but here is the joy of the soul, I have found the pearl of price: As for my own duties and performances, these good pearls, though I have them, and rejoice in them in Christ, yet I will not plead to be justified by them; I will not so much as say when I have been performing the best duty, Lord remember me for my prayers sake: But I desire to be found in Christ, for the Lord Jesus hath bought all, purchased all. And so now the Lord is my righteousness, my care is to be found in him: Now I have a rich pearl, though I have poor duties and prayers; indeed they are good and useful, and glorious in their places, but I have found one pearl worth all, one Christ worth all, and this pearl I live on for all, and live on in all: Now faith the believer, I have enough, I have got a Christ, and I will live upon him, I will live to him, and I will rejoice in him; now I desire to enjoy nothing here below, if I do not enjoy him; for first, Christ is a rare pearl. Whom with thee can compare? who in the heavens or among the sons of the mighty can compare with Christ? Among all the angels in heaven, who can be compared to Christ? Take all their praises and triumphs, and all the services of those glorious spirits? are they to be compared to Christ? Then how low and mean are our best services? I am sure, if the service of the angels cannot compare with Christ, much less can ours: Will you come at last and measure

with God? Will you measure God's justice and your poor duties? There is not, the most righteous man living on earth, but it will be said, *Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting*; but to the man that knows Christ, Christ is weighed for him, and Christ is full and perfect weight: justice hath good satisfaction; therefore well did Paul to cast off all: Saith he, *I desire to be found in him*; he is a rare pearl; well may a believer cast off all and desire to be found in Christ. Psal. lxxxix. 6. *Who in the heavens can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?* O what striving is here for kingdoms and crowns? but put all the kingdoms in the world, and if there were ten thousand worlds more, one Christ is more worth than ten thousand times ten thousand worlds. But soul, if thou art but poor in the world, hast but little here, yet if thou hast a Christ; thou art rich enough; then well may a believer say, *O let it to me, to live, be Christ*; let me enjoy no good means or mercies but in Christ, because he is a rare pearl. To see a soul in Christ, what a rare portion, a rare mercy is bestowed on that soul? We may see a multitude hearing, praying, seeking goodly pearls; but it is rare to see a soul that hath found this pearl of great price, selling all for Christ, casting away all as dung and dross for Christ; selling all, that is, not as if a man that knew Christ were to run out of house and home, but so to live upon Christ, as to tramp

on the world; so to use his blessing in the world, as that he may have his heart ready to leave them when ever he is called to it; and to sell his righteousness, that is, not to trust to it. Do not mistake me, to think the knowledge of Christ makes you less in duty; it makes you more in love, more in delight, and more in praises and prayer: For, saith the soul, though I have prayed, or heard, or been at the blessed supper, which of all these may be compared with Christ? Therefore I will sell all for this goodly pearl, that I may have this pearl of price. When you come to die and leave this world, if you have this pearl of great price, you go boldly to the throne of the Father: O whatever other goodly pearls you have, you are lost for ever, if you have not this pearl of price. A believer performs duties as they are commanded of God, and as the way wherein God meets his people; but to his acceptance he hath his eye upon Christ alone; for the best of duties are but dung and dross to compare with this precious pearl. When Satan comes with his temptations, and tells the believer, what a poor unworthy creature he is; the believer that hath his eye upon Christ for acceptance, he may boldly answer Satan, though I am poor and unworthy, he through whom I am accepted, is precious and dearly beloved of God the Father, who is well pleased with him and in him.

Secondly, Christ is a rich pearl; therefore you may well live upon him, you may well say,

for me to live is Christ; if you know Christ aright, your hearts, words and lives cry out, *for me to live is Christ*; persons for want of knowing Christ, remain poor, and blind, and miserable, and naked; Col. i. 19. *For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*: All fulness of the Godhead, all fulness of grace, peace, glory dwells in Christ; when you have Christ, you have enough to live on, for you have a rich pearl. The rich man is covetous for more riches; the believer is covetous for more of Christ; he would enjoy nothing, but he would enjoy Christ in it, Christ above it. O soul, here is enough to enrich you! It is for want of knowing Christ, that poor sinners stand off from Christ: For first,

*Mr. Sedgwick's
Fountain opened.*

Though sinners are very poor, they are very proud. Secondly, Though they are very poor, they are very ignorant. First, Though sinners are very poor, they are very proud; they would fain be doing something rather than come to Christ; they would fain be trading for goodly pearls: As if a man that was dry, should be going through a field, where there was much water, that was pure and clean; and the man should say, I shall dirty my cloaths to come at it, and in the clear water my face will be seen, and therefore I will rather drink of some muddy, dirty water, that I may not see my face: So it is with poor sinners, they would fain drink the kennel-water of their own duties; for they are afraid to come to Christ for fear of seeing

their own faces, for fear of seeing themselves undone and miserable; and therefore the soul cries out, will God look on me? Will so righteous a God entertain me? If I were better, if I could but get my heart to break, and could have my heart enlarged, I would come to Christ; but shall I a filthy sinner think to have grace and righteousness? Thus poor sinners would be trading with their own coin and with their own duties; they are very unwilling, that all their own duties should be cast down; but saith, Paul, *That I counted to be gain, I found loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.* O let me be found in Christ, now let me put off my own rags; now let me live on nothing of my own, but on Christ; Rom. x. 3. *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.* And in Rom. ix. They were prone to their own righteousness and would not come to Christ for righteousness; in Vers. 31, 32. *But Israel which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness, wherefore? because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law; for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone.* They stumbled, they could not lay down all their own works, all their own righteousness. In point of justification, they stumbled at the righteousness of faith; they would be justified by the deeds of the law, which justified no man,

but condemns every man. All sinners are proud and poor; they would not be beholden to Christ for all. They would apprehend some worthiness in themselves to be accepted of God. Secondly, Sinners are very poor and very ignorant; they think to get out of debt some other way than by Christ, or by the help of Christ; they are like a poor man that is in debt, he trades and thinks to get out of debt; but the business is so carried, that he runs further in debt; so one comes to him, and tells him, you do not get at all out of debt by your trading, pray consider how poor you are, and rest no longer on your own trading to bring you out of debt; but if you will come along with me, I will bring you to one, will pay all your debts for you. The glorious gospel that reveals the Lord Jesus Christ, calls sinners to accept of him, as poor, miserable, undone sinners, who are deeply indebted to God, acquaints them that Jesus Christ hath paid a full price for them to set them free. John viii. 36. *The Son shall make you free, then shall you be free indeed.* Yet poor sinners, they think they have something to trade with; they think if they could but pray more, or remember sermons more, they should get out of God's debt; but they take a wrong course, for all that they can do, they do but run further into debt; by all that you can do, you will never get out of debt, if you have not a righteousness in Christ, you will never be accepted of God; you must lay down all your own, and as a poor sinner

ay hold on Christ; as the merchant-man sells all the goodly pearls to buy this pearl of price. Well might Paul say, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*; I live upon him, to him, I live in him; I was so poor I could never get out of debt by all that I could do; therefore I desire to be found in Christ alone. Many are complaining, they cannot do this or that, as if they would get out of debt by their own works; but now Christ is rich enough to make up all your losses; When a man hath one to repair and make up all his losses, he may well depend on him. Rom. v. from 15th verse to the end. *But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one, many be dead; much more by the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath*

reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Here you see, whatever the offence of unrighteousness and sin and condemnation is ; there is life and righteousness by Jesus Christ to make up the breach : All that lay hold on Christ, shall have righteousness and life by him : For as sin and death reigned in Adam, so life and righteousness reigns in Christ, and is imputed to the sinner by him ; so that Christ is rich enough to make up all losses. Alas ! It is not in ourselves to do this. In the first Adam there is death and condemnation, and unrighteousness, and guilt and wrath ; here now must be one to satisfy, here must be one to bring in righteousness, and life, and grace, and that more than sin ; but where is that man that his righteousness and grace abounds more than sin ? Man cannot do this himself, he must have one that hath an all-sufficient righteousness and infinite grace, that may present him to the Father to be accepted, that the grace of God, the gift of life and righteousness may overcome and wrap up the poor sinner wholly in it, that he may be without spot or wrinkle. If it be so, that in Christ you shall have all your losses made up and repaired, should you not live on Christ for all you want ? are you sinful ? Christ is righteous ; are you dead in sin ? Christ hath brought life and immortality to light ; have you sinned to a great height ? Christ's merit is above all your sin ; where sin hath abounded, grace doth much

more abound; where sin hath abounded, there is a superabounding grace, superabounding righteousness, and superabounding life. Adam received the promise of the woman's seed before he had done any work or sacrifice, to the end that God's truth might stand fast, namely that we are justified before God altogether without works, and do obtain forgiveness of sins merely by grace; who so were able to believe this well and stedfastly, the same were a doctor above all the doctors in the world; said Luther again, *All heretics have failed in this point, that they do not rightly understand nor know the articles of justification; how we are justified before God: for if that were lost, then manifold errors of necessity would ensue.* O then, how rich is Christ! how rich in merit to pay God all that is due to him from the sinner! O faith one, I am a great sinner; faith another, I have great imperfections in my duties; I am so carnal, so dead, so wandering, so indifferent; I am afraid to come to God, I am so sinful: why poor soul, here is a Christ for you to live upon; here is righteousness for sin, life for death, pardon for condemnation: then go to Christ, lay hold of him by faith as given of God to you, and then you will say with Paul, *For me to live is Christ.*

Secondly, As Christ is rich enough to repair all our losses; so you are enriched with all the treasure of Christ, 1 Cor. iii. ult. *For all is your's, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's,* as if he should say, have you a Christ with God? is your Christ God's Son, and is he heir of all

things? then all is your's; Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, are all your's; all the ministers of Christ are sent for the good of the redeemed ones, all that are Christ's: then the saint may say, is all mine? is life mine? yes, life is your's; for while you live, you shall live a sanctified life: well, but is death mine? many are afraid to die; yes, death is your's; death is made your friend; death is conquered in Christ; and when death comes, you need not be afraid to entertain your Lord's messenger, that he sends to fetch you home to his glory: death is sent to fetch you out of your houses of clay to meet your Redeemer, and sit on the throne with him, and to enjoy your Lord in glory. Saith the believer, but how comes all this to be mine? why, *you are Christ's, and Christ is God's*: all things are yours, the crowns above, the thrones above, the saints above, the angels above, fulness of joy above, rivers of pleasure above; and how comes all this to be your's in Christ? because Christ is God's, and God hath possessed him with all things and made him heir of all things; therefore he enriches his members with all things: then well may a saint desire neither life, nor any thing in life, any further than he enjoys Christ.

Thirdly, As Christ repairs all your losses, and as you are enriched with the treasures of Christ, so he enriches your souls also: as you have riches above, and riches below, so he enriches you within. When a soul knows Christ, what a glorious knowledge of the things above comes

into the soul? he enriches your poor, dark, beggarly understandings; for while a man is ignorant of Christ, what poor, low things does he study and seek after? but when a soul comes to have Christ revealed to him, then the soul comes to aspire and enquire after God and Christ, and the things above; he enlightens the understanding, that before did lead on the affections to grasp after a little vain pleasures and honors, and profits in this world, and now causes the soul to pursue after higher things; then he enriches the will, *I will make them a willing people in the day of my power*, Psal. cx. 3. It is a glorious thing to have the will subdued, the will renewed; to have a perverse, stubborn will, now to serve in the beauties of holiness.

Secondly, He enriches the affections with joy, and peace, and delight: O what a glory is it to have the affections raised up! the heart set on things above, on Jesus Christ! the soul is seeking after glory, the heart is seeking after heavenly things. When Jesus Christ comes, he enriches all the affections of the soul; *The king's daughter is all glorious within*; Christ is so rich a pearl, such riches in him, that he sets open doors to all that come; whoever come shall find welcome; there is enough in him, for the sinner to live upon, while he lives here, and to all eternity.

Thirdly, Christ is an heart-cheering pearl: O saith the soul, could I but have Christ for mine, enjoy Christ, how would my heart rejoice? Now, when Christ shines with a glimpse

of his righteousness into the soul; O saith the soul, that I could enjoy more of this Christ, more of his grace, of his love! Saith the spouse, *He brought me into the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love*, Cant. ii. 4. Banners of love, O what a cheerful feast I have now! I think all the afflictions and temptations I have in the world can never cast me down, the heart is cheered: What, is Christ mine? What, is God mine? Is grace mine? and righteousness mine? and glory mine? This is an heart-cheering pearl; O it is such a pearl, drink it in all your potions, and bring Christ in every duty! Then a soul may take comfort and reason thus with himself; though I am dead in duty, Christ lives; though I am sinful, Christ is righteous; though my corruption abound, Christ's grace doth much more abound: Take Christ in every potion, and in all duties, let Christ be there still: *I have set the Lord always before me* (saith David) so should you set Christ always before you, and when Satan or conscience accuses, set Christ before you as your perfect righteousness. Saith the Psalmist, Psal. xvi. 8. *I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.* Verse. 9. *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth, my flesh also shall rest in hope.* Verse 10. *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.* If Christ shall be raised up to glory, then I will live in hope of being raised up to glory with him: The Psalmist speaks prophetically of

Christ ; *Neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.* Now, saith the believer, if Christ conquers death, and hell, and did not see corruption, I may well rejoice, for I set the Lord always before me, and whatever he enjoys I shall have a glorious share in.

Fourthly, He is an everlasting pearl : Many have rich pearls, live on them, and spend them : but live on Christ as long as you will, you will never waste Christ's stock : All the sinners, that ever came to the gate of mercy, and have been supplied with mercy, ever since the drawbridge of mercy hath been let down, never diminished or lessened Christ's mercy : No, he is an everlasting pearl ; for he that believes in Christ, shall have everlasting life : *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son to die, that whosoever believed on him should not perish but have everlasting life,* John iii. 16. There you see is a pearl that will last you for ever ; when friends fail you, and the world fails you, he will not fail you. *For he that believes shall never perish, but have everlasting life.*

Fifthly, He is a most glorious pearl : If ever you would live a glorious life, live on Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory ; *We see his glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth.* He is a glorious pearl, therefore see to it ; in all you enjoy, let Christ be the prime principal thing, to be the all in all, and more than all in every thing you enjoy.

The 8th reason : A believer desires not life, nor nothing in life, no further than he enjoys Christ ; for he knows that Christ is better than life, Psal. lxiii. *O God thou art my God ; early will I seek thee, my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land where no water is ; to see thy power and thy glory, as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee : Thus will I bless thee while I live, I will lift up my hands in thy Name. Thou shalt be the object of my worship, thee alone will I trust in, thee alone will I rest on, because thy loving-kindness is better than life ; thy grace, and mercy, and love in Christ is better than life : God is very gracious to give us our lives ; he did not owe us one moment of time. When we came into the world, he might immediately have sent us to our graves.*

First, God's love in giving of Christ is better than life : How gracious is God to preserve us hitherto ? But what an act of grace to give Christ ; when poor sinners lay weltering in their blood, for the love of God to pity them, and look on them, and bestow Christ upon them !

Secondly, Christ is better than life, because of the wonder of God's love ; the love of God in giving Christ is more wonderful and admirable than life itself. This is a wonder of mercy : but the wonder of God's love in giving Christ, that is a greater wonder. O the height ! O the depth ! O the length and breadth of the love of God, in giving Jesus Christ ! O the

riches of his grace! *His love is past finding out:* In giving Jesus Christ there is height of love, depth of love, length of love, breadth of love; it is higher than heaven: Though our sins have reached to heaven, yet Christ's love is higher than our sins; it is deeper than hell; hell shall never prevail; all the plots of hell shall never prevail against a believer: Then as to the breadth of it; spread our thoughts as far as we can, we can never reach the love of Christ to poor sinners, it passeth knowledge. Then as to the length of it; it is longer than time, for it is everlasting.

Thirdly, It is better than life, if we consider the bounties of it: How bountiful is God to give us means and mercies in our life? But Jesus Christ is better than all, better than silver or gold, or all things that can be desired; who with him can compare?

Fourthly, He is better than life, in regard of the delights of life; though we may enjoy all comforts and mercies of this life, if we have not peace with God, what good will they do us? *A wounded spirit who can bear? who can stand against a sin-revenging God?* Then is not Christ better than life?

Next, Christ is better than life, if we consider, that the believer will never be separated from Christ: But as for our life, though we live a while, e're long we must lay down our lives, we must all e're long away to the house appointed for all living. But now as for Jesus Christ, where there is union with him, and

the soul lives to him and upon him, there is neither life nor death, *things present, nor things to come, shall separate a believer from Christ.* Rom. viii. 39. *Neither height nor depth, nor any thing shall be able to separate him from Christ.*

Nintbly, A believer is well acquainted what it is to be without Christ, and know what it is to have Christ: *For me to live is Christ,* (as if he should say) I know what it was once to live without him, to trust to my own works, to live on any thing without him; I knew once what it was to be without faith, and without God, and without true hope, and without true joy, and without true consolation; now I know what a wonderful change there is in me, and what a wonderful difference there is between my living in Christ, and my living without Christ; before, if I had any hope, it was false; if I had any comfort, it was perishing: But now my hopes are built on another foundation, and all my comforts spring from another fountain. Oh I would not live one day without Christ, I would not have one mercy or duty without him! While I lived without Christ, it was all lost time, I lived on vanity and folly; now I have many a weeping eye, and sighing heart, for those things I once took delight in. O my vanities! my lost days! O that I knew Christ no sooner! O that I got not acquaintance with him before!

First, The believer will tell you, all the days of his life before he knew Christ, were spent in folly and vanity. O the time that is run out in

vanity! O let me not live in any comfort or enjoyment where I do not enjoy Christ! O, saith the soul, the difference that is between the joy I have in Christ, and the foolish mad pleasures I enjoyed when I lived out of Christ! Now Lord, let me not live but to glorify thee; Lord, I would be with thee, and glorify thee in all; let Christ be all in all to me: What weeping eyes and wounded hearts will sinners have that live without Christ, when once they come to know Christ, that they lived so long without him? O how ready are poor sinners to think we do them much wrong in wooing them to come to Christ, and accept of him! But poor sinner, when thou comest to know Christ, thou wilt then with a weeping eye and heart cry out, *O let me not live, but to Christ.* A believer, will say, It is high time for me to awake, and to be serious and earnest in seeking Jesus Christ: Many are turned from vain sinners to foolish professors; but take a true honest-hearted believer, and ask him, what would you have? *O that I may enjoy Christ,* saith he. What would you have in every duty? What would you have in ordinances? O let me have Christ, or else they will be poor empty wells without water, clouds without rain to my soul!

Secondly, He will tell you it was not only vain and foolish, but altogether unprofitable. Saith the Apostle, *What I counted gain, I found loss: What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?* Mat. xvi. 26. Saith

the Apostle, *What I counted gain, I found loss.* Alas ! What profit shall I have of my education and learning ? I thought once I was as happy as another, and a little duty would make me happy for ever ; but I see without Christ I am undone for ever ; I thought if I gave God something of his due, if I did some duties, and was something beyond the vain world, I should be happy ; but I see nothing will do, or can profit me without Christ ; for without I live in Christ, I cannot enjoy Christ, I cannot enjoy grace in Christ, righteousness in Christ, faith in Christ.

Thirdly, I see all my duties are poor worthless things out of Christ ; I thought to have prayed my way to heaven, but I see all my duties are dross and dung, let me not meet one of them without Christ : I had lost my prayers and my soul, had I not been shipt in Christ, had I not had Christ to be my all, and in all ; I see all would have been unprofitable if I had not had Christ ; prayers, Sabbaths, hearing : What is all my hearing, if I have not Christ ; So also the supper of the Lord, and other duties, what would they be to me without Christ ? they would be as *whited sepulchers, which within are full of dead men's bones and all uncleannesse*, Mat. xxiii. 27. O how miserable was I before I knew Christ, and lived to Christ ! Nay, faith a believer, I cannot tell you how wretched I was ; but I can tell you three things, First, I had been unprofitable, I had never brought forth fruit to God. Secondly, Uncomfortable in life, and

death, and unto all eternity. Thirdly, I had been wretched and miserable. O then, *come to me, I will tell you what God hath done for my soul*, Psal. lxvi. 16.

Tenthly, A believer desires neither means, nor mercies, nor comforts, but what he may enjoy Christ in; because a believer hath experienced how sweet the life of a believer is. O *taste and see that the Lord is good*, Psal. xxxiv. 8, 9. O taste and see how precious Christ is! how rich in mercy! how wonderful in love! O *taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. I will tell you what Christ hath done for me; I cried unto the Lord and he heard me. I have experienced it; O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him, that liveth upon him. So in 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby. Is so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, O saith the soul, I desire I may live upon Christ, upon the promises of Christ, upon the love of Christ: What, if you have tasted that the Lord is gracious? Then let Christ be one at my table, one in my prayers, one in every ordinance, one where ever I am: What have I tasted? That the Lord is gracious, that is the best sauce to my meat, the best comfort to my soul; O I have tasted! What have you tasted? that the Lord is gracious, I experience; I know what he is, he is the chief of ten thousand, I can-*

not live without him, I cannot enjoy any mercy or any comfort without him. Saith the soul, What is this friend? This is not Christ; and what is this ordinance? This is not Christ: What can I take comfort in, if I have not Christ? The saints can experience how precious Christ is; to them that believe, he is precious; Mary came to the sepulchre, there was the place where her Lord lay, there were the grave-cloaths, the sepulchre, but her Lord was gone; where have you laid my Lord? There Mary stands weeping, I cannot live without Christ: So a soul comes to an ordinance, here is the tomb! here is the grave-cloaths! but where have they laid my Lord? what comfort is this or that? What is a Sabbath? What is a sermon? What is a sacrament? What are means and mercies without Christ? Where have you laid my Lord? Why, do you know him? Yes, saith the soul, he is the chief among ten thousand, I heard him speak to me, my sister, my spouse; and I have felt the sounding of my bowels towards him, he hath moved my heart, and I cannot be satisfied without him; I am sick unto death, if I do not enjoy Christ: Thus the soul experiences what Christ is, he is the chief of ten thousand: Why, he hath done more than ten thousand worlds could have done: What is he? I have tasted that he is gracious; I have experienced the bowels of his mercies, the wonders of his grace; therefore saith the Psalmist, Psal. cxvi. *I believed, therefore have I spoken, vers. 5. Gracious is the Lord, and right-*

eous ; yea, our God is merciful. 6. The Lord preserveth the simple ; I was brought low and he helped me. Saith the poor soul, I was as low as the gates of hell, I was as one without hope till Christ raised me up ; Christ was my helper ; God laid help on one that was mighty, what then ? now will I live upon this God ; Return unto thy rest, O my soul ; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. Thou hast delivered my soul from eternal death, mine eyes from tears of sorrow, which I had, while they said, Where is my God ? My feet from falling into sin. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living ; I will live upon the Lord, to the Lord in the land of the living. I believed, therefore have I spoken it ; what I set forth of the wonders of the Lord, that have I experienced. And saith the Apostle, 1 John i. 3. These things write we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ ; and we would have you live as we do, live on Christ as we do. O saith the believer, that all persons did but know Christ, and live upon Christ : We write unto you that ye also may have fellowship with us ; for truly our ends and aims are that you may live as noble lives as we do ; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ : It is God in Christ that we live upon and have communion with : O the soul that experiences what it is to live on

Christ, desires in all things to enjoy Christ. The spouse would not step a foot without him, *Come my beloved, let us go forth into the fields; let us lodge in the villages; let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish.* Ah, you that have experience of Christ! me thinks it should be your voice always on your beds, and in your walking, *Come let us go, come my beloved, and wake with me; come and watch over me; come my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages;* the spouse knows the sweetness of his company, the excellency of his presence, the glory of his holiness. Without Christ, what would a sermon or a Sabbath be? What though I could lay up silver like dust; if I could heap up gold like pebble stones; if I could gain all the riches of the world, what is it all without Christ? But the believer knows what it is to enjoy Christ, and to live in Christ, and therefore cries, O let him be with me in all I do, in all my undertakings. Lord, my soul waiteth and watches for thee. Ps. cxxx. 6. *My soul watches for thee more than they that watch for the morning.* As a man that is in sorrow all night, he longs for the break of the day. Saith the Psalmist, *My soul doth wait for the Lord,* I am not an out-side professor, my soul is engaged in the work. I wait for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning. What stirs up the good man to this earnest longing for God? Oh, he had the experience of the sweet comforts he had found in communion with the

Lord! That soul must needs be dead and careless in seeking the Lord, that experiences not what it is to enjoy the Lord in duties and ordinances. O that it might please God to convince all you that hear me this day, that have been formal, careless professors! Had you ever had a taste of Christ, you could not be content to go on so cold and careless as most of you do in your profession.

The 11th reason or ground is this, A believer knows it to be a glorious life: We are changed from glory to glory into the same image. Now the believer knows it to be a glorious life, because he hath received, and doth expect great things from Christ, saith the soul, will live upon Christ, for I have received great things from Christ.

First, I have received the pardon of my sins from him; I was under the wrath of God, but now I have *Redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*, Eph. i. 7. I am a pardoned soul; I am freed from wrath by him, *even that Jesus that saves from the wrath to come*, 1 Thess. i. 10.

Secondly, I have received justification by him; a righteousness to stand before God, *being justified freely by his grace*, Rom. iii. 24.

Thirdly, I received sanctification from him, Acts. xxvi. 28. *Who are sanctified through faith in Christ Jesus.*

Fourthly, I have received consolation from Christ; and then I expect great things to come, expect when this poor earthly tabernacle is

laid down, for Christ to raise me; not only to raise my body out of the grave, but to *change my vile body, and fashion it like unto his glorious body*, Phil. iii. 21. I do expect to see my Lord coming with his glorious train, when the last trump shall blow, awaking me out of my sleep, and *raising up my dust at the last day*, John vi. 44. I expect at Christ's appearing a great glory, Tit. ii. 13, 14. *Looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* Saith the believer, I live upon Christ, because I expect great things from Christ when Christ comes; I have a blessed hope, I desire he may be my life, all in my life; I look for great things when Christ comes; it is a blessed hope that I have: When will you have your hopes accomplished! at the glorious appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ? Why do you expect such great things? I will tell you, because he gave himself for me, and redeemed me. You that have low thoughts of Christ, can you expect great things from Christ? Can you say even *Amen, so come Lord Jesus*; you that seldom invite him into your closets now, can you expect his coming will be joyful to you? Will you not rather say, *Let not thy chariot wheels make such speed, for I am not ready.*

What, is he a coming? Have you a blessed hope in him? If one of you should go to many

and say, do you hope for Christ's coming? They would say, yes; but have a care, for many have a cursed hope, a vain hope, and a bad hope, a devilish hope I fear. When Christ comes, many will be dreadfully mistaken. What can you expect at Christ's coming, when you do not desire Christ here? A little thing takes their hearts off from Christ; their hearts are more set on other things than Christ; they have not invited Christ, nor have a blessed hope in Christ: But all you saints that have made Christ your life, will have a blessed hope in Christ at death. You that can speak with comfort, you desire not life, nor any means nor mercies but what you enjoy Christ in them. You will have a blessed hope when the glorious trump is sounded before him; you will say, What, is that the voice of my Lord? Is this trump for me? must I awake, be raised up, be glorified with my Lord; go in with the glorious church triumphant, and sit upon the throne with them? But for the poor, careless, lifeless, legal, formal professor, the dead-hearted and trifling professor, Christ's coming will be a dreadful appearing to you: What is Christ's appearing, when I have not made him my life, I have not lived upon him, I have not loved to him? I am at a distance from him, I am a stranger to him. O see how furious are his chariot wheels? Is that him in flames of fire, that makes the mountains tremble? O my heart, how canst thou but shake at the sight of him!

G

but the saint, he rejoices, and he hopes, and waits for the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ. O saint, have you but little here? But short hints here? But little comfort here? The great comfort is, that you make Christ your life, that you live on Christ; and though you do enjoy but little now, I tell you there is great things for you when Christ appears: Looking for that glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, who gave himself for me. O, saith a believer, I long to see that face that was spit upon for me: I long to see that glorious body that was pierced for me; that glorious head that was crowned with thorns for me; those hands and feet that were nailed to the cross for me. It will be a blessed, a glorious hope, the Lord Jesus's appearing. Oh, I long to see him: I expect glorious things; I expect a glorious crown, glorious robes, a glorious throne; I expect everlasting joy, and I expect rivers of pleasure. Is not this an inducement to a believer, to make Christ his life? When we expect great things, how does it cause us to be intent about them? Where a soul expects high things, and great things from Christ, they will live upon Christ, and to Christ, make Christ their all: In all mercies, and comforts, and enjoyments: what is the reason many are poor, carnal, dead professors, and have low thoughts of those things that are preached in the gospel, but because they never relished Christ? And it is as much as ever they can do to creep along in the ways of God; and may be something of

conscience causes them to perform duty. But where the soul hath glorious and high expectations, it is otherwise; great things he hath done for them, and great things he is doing; he is advocating and interceding with the Father, answer all accusations, and pleading for poor sinners. *I go to prepare a place for you, saith Christ, and will come again and fetch you, that where I am you may be also.* I am going to prepare for you mansions of glory, robes of glory, crowns of glory, immortal glory: Is not this Lord to be lived upon, and to be desired more than all things that can be desired? Therefore had you ever experienced what it is to enjoy Christ, and live on Christ, you could not but have high and glorious thoughts of the blessed Jesus; you could not but have your hearts raised up with high expectation what he will do for you. But poor trifling formal professor, whatever thou professest, I fear thou knowest not Jesus Christ. Ask your heart, have I glorious hopes of Christ's appearing? Have I glorious hopes of reigning with him in heaven? Doth he reign in my heart now? Do I prize him, and make him my all, desire him in all, and glorify him above all? I believe, should you put this question to your souls, you would many of you know that you are great strangers to Christ. But a believer that can experience the love of Christ, is lifted up in admiration of the wonders of his grace, crying out, On what wonders of grace! What glorious love! What a precious Redeemer is this! Did he die for me?

Did he cry out, *my God, my God*, and was I on his heart, when he drank of the brook by the way, and lift up his head, and was it for me? He went out of the world by a curied shameful death up to his Father's glory, and said that he would come again to fetch me; he will make death to be a sweet embassador for me; the angels will come and convey my soul to glory. O what will be your thoughts when you shall see your Lord coming in the clouds; when you shall hear him say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world*; and sit down with palms in your hands, and with crowns on your heads; surely believing that he is your Lord, and that his glory is your glory, and that he will come again and fetch you, then you shall be for ever with the Lord, 1 Thes. from 13 to 18. “ But I would not have you to be
“ ignorant, brethren, concerning them which
“ are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others
“ which have no hope. For if we believe that
“ Jesus died, and rose again, even so them al-
“ so which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with
“ him. For this we say unto you by the word
“ of the Lord, that we which are alive, and
“ remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall
“ not prevent them which are asleep. For the
“ Lord himself shall descend from heaven with
“ a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel,
“ and with the trump of God; and the dead
“ in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are
“ alive, and remain, shall be caught up toge-

“ther with them in the clouds, to meet the
“ Lord in the air; and so we shall ever be
“ with the Lord.” So much for the eleventh
reason. This is a glorious life the believer hath
experienced, and that because he hath great
expectation of what Christ will do for him, as
well as what he hath done for him; therefore
desires to make this blessed Christ his life.

The twelfth reason is, because a believer can
see no object so glorious as the Lord Jesus
Christ is: And, saith the soul, all I can see, I
count it all empty in comparison of Christ; for
to see the Father in the Son choosing me in
election before the world was, to see this glo-
rious love out of the bosom of the Father, to be
given for me, to be my ransom and salvation;
O how glorious an object is he to behold! O
how glorious is the sun in the firmament that
lightens the whole world! But then, O how
glorious is he that came out of the bosom of
the Father, the brightness of his glory! O my
soul, let me behold him, and live upon him! I
can see no way but he is glorious; O love for
delight!

The thirteenth reason, A believer desires to
live on Christ, because the Lord Jesus Christ
hath paid all and done all for him, he hath
bought all for him; and saith the believer, all
I have is from Christ; have I peace, hope, joy?
It is all bought by Christ: I might have had a
despairing soul, or a cursed hope; I might have
been under the curse and wrath of God; I

might have been among the damned souls, that are roaring in hell: But have I peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost? Christ hath bought and brought me to the hope of an incorruptible kingdom of glory; and as he hath bought all and paid for all, I live upon him for all: As the apostle saith, 1 Pet. i. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.* All the joy I have, and hope I have of heaven is bought by Christ; all the enjoyment of God I have, all the glory my soul is crowned with, all the joy my heart is filled with, is bought by Christ; therefore saith the apostle, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath begotten to us a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.* It is Jesus Christ hath ransomed me from death, from hell, from guilt of sin; he hath bought an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, therefore I desire to live upon him.

The fourteenth reason, The believer desires to live upon Jesus Christ, because he works all his works in him: There is not a good motion in him, but Christ is the worker of it; not a good thought or good action, but all is from Christ. Isa. xxvi. 12. *Lord thou wilt ordain peace for us; for thou hast wrought all our works on us.* The Lord hath wrought for me redemption, salvation, sanctification, consolation and hope of glory; therefore I will live upon him for all.

So much for the doctrinal part, and reasons of the propositions, why a believer desires to live upon Christ and to Christ in all: The application follows.

The first inference from the point, is this, If it is so, that the desires of a believer run out in all after Christ, to enjoy him more than all. If Christ is a believer's life, then a believer must needs live a very fruitful life: A believer's life is no barren nor unfruitful life, he cannot be a barren tree; there are no unfruitful branches in Christ, that fruitful vine: He that chooses Christ with his whole desire, to make Christ his all, he must needs be a fruitful liver, increasing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Indeed a believer may have some dark days that look gloomy, he may have some summer droughts may make him look withered; notwithstanding he is sound at root, he hath rooting in Christ; *for me to live is Christ*, saith the Apostle; while I live I will have my life bound up in him, and expect all from him: a soul that does thus, cannot have an unfruitful life; there may be some summer droughts; but is *Christ* your life? and do you expect him to be your all, and wrap up yourselves in *Christ*, it is impossible for you to be barren; for I tell you, you that look up, expecting to have your life of grace and comfort from Christ, he will not let your expectation fail. I do not speak, what you are sometimes in your sense and feeling, but what you are by faith in Christ. As that good Mr. Peacock, he had a summers

drought. Saith he, *I feel a hell in my conscience*, crying out of the woful burden of his sins, saying, *how woful and miserable is my state, that thus must converse with hell-hounds!* the standers-by asked him to pray, I cannot, said he; suffer us to pray for you; he replied, take not God's name in vain for a reprobate as I am: yet after these greivous pangs, this blessed saint found much comfort, as did appear by his expressions: I have been far led, and deeply troubled with temptation and sting of conscience, I thank God, they are ceased in good measure; I desire I may not be branded for a cast-away or reprobate. He declared, that he renounced his inconsiderate speech in his trouble and temptation, humbly and heartily asking mercy of God for them; and after receiving a little more light, that through mercy did arise in his heart, he brake forth in such speeches as these: I do feel, God be praised, such comfort, that if I had an hundred worlds I could not make satisfaction for such an issue; the sea is not fuller of water, nor the sun of light, than God is of mercy; his mercies are ten thousand times more: What cause have I to magnify the great goodness of God, that hath humbled, nay rather exalted such a wretched miscreant, one of so base a condition to a state so glorious and stately; the Lord hath honoured me with his goodness, I am sure he hath prepared a glorious kingdom for me; the joy I feel in my heart is incredible.

Mr. Glover, in his trouble and casting down, thus complains; What he felt inwardly in his

spirit, no speech was able to express, he lay languishing in trouble for the space of five years, he took no comfort in meat or drink, nor any pleasure in his life; being under the sense of some back-sliding, was perplexed, as if he had been in the deepest pit of hell; he did not eat his food from any appetite, but for this end, to defer his damnation, thinking with himself, that he must needs be thrown into hell so soon as his breath was out of his body; yet after this summer drought, this servant of the Lord had sweet showers of mercy from Christ his life; after his many years buffetings and strong temptations, he received great comfort, and afterward lived altogether an heavenly life. No art of man, no arm of flesh, no earthly comfort, no earthly power can possibly heal or help in this condition; neither men nor angels, friends nor phyſic, gold nor silver, pleasures nor profits, preferments or favours; *Mr. B's Cases of* infinite skill must take this in hand *Conscience.* or else never any cure and recovery can be had.

A poor believer may be brought so low through temptation and desertions, that they that behold them may think they are cast off by God; but the believer's life is hid in Christ, and doth yet hope for a time of refreshing; as one that stands by the trees and plants perceiving them to look withered, tells the gardiner that he had as good cut them down as let them incumber the ground, for he believes they are dead; but saith the gardiner you are mistaken,

the root is alive in the ground, I hope for a good shower from heaven to revive them; a believer by faith beholds his life in Christ expecting for the drooping of his Spirit to revive his drooping spirit. Saith the saint, you think, because I am under temptations and burthened with sin, my hope is gone; no, in Christ my root is green, and I wait to have his grace and comforts poured out, and I shall be raised up again. Saith David, *I look to the everlasting hills from whence my help comes*, Psal. cxxiii. 1, 2. *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens.* “Behold, as the eyes of the servants
 “look unto the hand of their masters, and as
 “the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her
 “mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our
 “God.” (how long?) *until that he have mercy upon us*, Psal. cxxi. 1. I look, saith David, to the hills, that is to Sion hill, where God meets his people, through faith in God by Christ: David did not look to the tabernacle barely, but to God in Christ figuratively. Psal. xviii. 24. *Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth*; and do you behold that God, that made the heavens, that made all things? do you see the clouds? do you see the glorious sun? to that God will I look, till he break the clouds and send down streams that glad the city of God. I lift up my eyes to God in Christ, I lift up my eyes to the everlasting hills, to the eternal love of God in Christ and everlasting righteousness of God in Christ, till he look down on me, and look into my soul;

therefore though you see me look like a barren tree in summer drought, it does but make me long the more for a shower for watering, that is it I look up for. O saint! what do you expect to see? O faith he, though satan tempt me, and conscience may trouble me, and my soul be cast down, that I am a sinner, a condemned sinner; but I will look up, till God reveals Christ's righteousness to be my righteousness, Rom. i. 17. *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith.*

A believer must needs live a thriving life, that lives on Christ: the truth of which among the rest that might be brought to prove this, I shall only lay down three things to demonstrate, that every true believer's soul is in a thriving and prosperous state, that can neither fall from the state of grace nor lose any one grace.

First, Christ is the fountain of life whom they are united to.

Secondly, Rain from heaven to water them in time of drought.

Thirdly, The sun of righteousness to revive them in winter seasons.

First, Jesus Christ is the fountain of life, the vital fountain from whence a believer hath a continual supply of grace to maintain his spiritual life, John xiv. 19. *Because I live you shall live also.* We may ask them that talk of falling from grace, what the child told the mother. I have heard of a godly woman, being left a widow in great distress, the children crying for

bread, and she having none to give, saith the mother, "children be comforted for God lives;" the child sometime after saw the mother cry, "mother," saith the child "is God dead?" We may put this question to the Arminian, when he pleads for falling from grace, is Christ dead, that a believer can fall from grace? who hath said, *Because I live, you shall live also*; while Christ hath it, a believer shall never want, Phil. iv. 19. *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.* A believer shall not want grace to maintain his spiritual warfare; if he live fighting he shall die conquering; John i. 16. *Of his fulness have we all received, grace for grace.* The believer hath all in a way of receiving; Adam had his stock in his own hands, he lost it; but a believer's stock is in the hands of Christ and shall never be lost; *he is the author and the finisher of their faith*, Heb. xii. 2.

As the first Adam, that we by nature are all in, is the original of our death and misery; so is the Lord Jesus Christ the second Adam in believers and they in him, who is the original cause of their restoration and life, who gives daily supplies to them out of his infinite fulness. What good is there in man, but what is first in Christ, as the original head of the covenant and public receiver? Wouldst thou see God's love and grace streaming towards thy soul, must thou not see it first lodged in Christ, as the fountain of all? Dost thou

Mr. Gale's Summary of Mr. Strong's book on the Two Covenants.

desire to see all thy sins wiped off? Must thou not first see them wiped off from Christ thy representative? Wouldst thou by a provision of faith see thyself in a glorified state? O then by faith look on Christ the head of the covenant glorified for thee. Alas! If thou look on thyself in thyself, growing out of thine own natural root, what art thou but as a branch cut off from the olive root? But how comfortable and sweet is it to see thyself crucified, acquitted and glorified in Christ the head of the covenant!

The soul that lives on Christ shall neither lose nor lack grace, but shall have daily supplies from Christ, who is an ever-flowing fountain of grace and comfort. So long as there runs oil from the olive branches, there shall never want light in the lamps: This oil from the olive branches that runs through the golden pipes is the emblem of supernatural grace filled from the true olive tree, ever emptying themselves, and are ever full of the gospel ordinances filled by Christ, always filling his members, true christians, and ever full for all believers: It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and that the Lord Jesus Christ is both active and willing to communicate it to believers according as their want requires. He also may be pointed at in his two offices by the two golden pipes conveying the oil from the trees to the candlesticks, it

Mr. Pool's Annotations.

Mr. Hutcheson's Exposition on Zechariah.

H

being through his merit as priest, and his efficacy as king, that the fulness in him becomes ours; it is the enjoyment of Christ in ordinances that doth refresh the believer's soul with the joys of God's salvation and causes him to *flourish like a palm tree in the courts of their God*, Psal. xcii. 13. If the death of Christ hath brought unto us righteousness and life, what shall his life do? If our Saviour dying paid the price, what shall he do now being alive and interceding for us? For Christ liveth and dwelleth in the heart: If the remembrance of his most holy merit live and flourish in it, draw me Lord Jesus that I may be possessed in the truth of the thing, the which here I expect by the firmness of hope. *Let thy servant I pray thee be with thee and behold thy glory*, John xvii. 23. *And let him inhabit the mansions which thou hast prepared in thy Father's house*, John xiv. 2. *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord, they shall praise thee for ever and ever*, Psal. lxxxiv. 4.

Gerard's Meditations.

The Lord Jesus Christ, in his discourse with Martha about Lazarus, declares himself to be the fountain of life, grace and glory. John xi. 21. saith Martha to Jesus, Lord, *if thou hadst been here my brother had not died*. Here is, 1. Her sensibleness of their own weakness and frailty. 2. Of Christ's power, *If thou hadst been here my brother had not died*. Jesus saith unto her, *Thy brother shall rise again*. Christ speaks in general, to bring her faith to her particular case. Martha said, *I know it, he shall*

rise again in the resurrection. It is an easier matter to believe future things many times than present, because future things are put off by supposition. Many say, they believe the resurrection of the body ; but if they did really believe that their bodies should be raised up, and stand before God's tribunal, would they live quietly in a Christless state, or mistrust God in present streights? If we did but stand on the graves mouth, and consider, shall all this dust be raised up? Shall every person be raised up in order? Cannot this God deliver out of all streights? Said Martha, Lord, *if thou hadst been here my brother had not died* ; (but that was more than Martha knew) she depended too much upon his bodily presence. It may be that she thought Christ would have prayed for her brother, and so he would not have died ; but Christ comes to take her off of some depending on sensible things, and to live by faith. Jesus saith unto her, *Thy brother shall rise again.* Saith she, *I know at the resurrection he shall rise.* Jesus saith unto her, *I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live.* Martha had a general faith of the resurrection, but how to believe at the present that her brother should be raised up again, she knew not. When Jesus told her that her brother should live, saith she, *Lord he hath been dead four days* ; it seemed an impossibility that he should rise again ; yet before she believed the resurrection of the dead. Was it a greater impossibility to raise him up when no part of

him was diminished, than to raise him up at the last day? Saith Christ, *I am the life*, I will raise him up at the last day; and am not I able to raise up thy brother that hath been dead but four days? So should a believer say within himself under his doubts and fears; did the Lord convert me? bring me out of a state of sin and misery? quicken me when I was dead? and will he not give me life? Can he raise up Lazarus when dead four days, and cannot he raise up my dead heart? Saith Christ, *I am the life*, I am the original of life; I am the first that gives life; all are dead sinners till I come to quicken them, till I come to bring life to your souls. *Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die*, for I am the principle of their life; as I gave them life at first, so do I also continue their life, they shall never die.

When death comes the immortal soul is alive; it is but the body that is gone to the dust, that will be raised up again; that will be a glorious body for the soul to live with in eternal glory.

What an exceeding joy is it then for a believer, that Christ is the vital fountain of his life! Though death be at the very door, it shall never come into the soul: Though there may be a separation for a time, the soul is with Christ, and the body united to Christ, that the believer may be rather said to sleep, than die. The root of his comforts are alive. There may be a death on a believer's outward mercies and comforts, yet it shall never come into his soul.

As we see the trees in the winter seem to be dead, so the believer; they may fear the death of their comforts or graces: though they may have the withdrawings of God's presence, yet as the trees in spring, they revive and sprout forth: so shall they revive, and death shall not enter into their souls. Saith Paul, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God for the victory through Christ.* There is death in myself, but Christ gives me victory; he removes it, he carries it away; though it be at the door, it shall never come in at the door; if there be deadness upon the heart, Christ is life to my soul: if there be corruptions strong and great, Christ is the fountain of life, to ennoble me to outgrow all: As we may say of young children that are weak and infirm, they will outgrow their weaknesses. So children of God will outgrow their infirmities; they will outgrow their corruptions and inward weakness, they shall have victory over them, they shall be conquerors at the last. Christ being the vital fountain of life, a believer must needs live a growing flourishing life, the Lord Christ doth water them at the root, Psal. i. *The godly man is like a tree planted by a river of water, which withereth not, but bringeth forth fruit in due season, because there is a vital fountain, there is life at the root.* Isaiah xli. 18. The prophet speaking of Christ's being life to his church, he is said to be *rivers of water in high places.* Were not Christ rivers of

water, the saint would be dry at root; but he is *rivers of waters in a dry place*. Small rivers may flow from a fountain that may be stopt, but Christ is the ever-flowing fountain that none can stop. Rivers may be stopt in time of drought, but nothing shall stop the grace of Christ. Cold weather may freeze up rivers, but the coldest, deadeft heart that is, shall not freeze up Christ's grace; he will be rivers of water in dry places. Other rivers may dry of themselves, but all our unworthiness shall not bar Christ's grace from the soul.

Mr. Robinson's Christ
all in all.

Christ is set forth excellently by that rock our fathers drank of, and the rock followed them, *and that rock was Christ*, 1 Cor. xx. 4. How did the rock follow them? The water that was in the rock followed them by some channels or little rivers in the wilderness: So doth the Lord Jesus Christ his poor bewildered people; he not only is ready to give them grace, but follows them with grace, and follows them with mercy. *Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life*, Psal. xxiii. 6. Alas, if we should stand by the rock never so long, could we by smiting cause the water to gush forth? But this water is so free, that it flows to the believer: Christ follows the believer with his grace, follows them with his comforts, follows them with supports, follows them with new refreshments. If this rock did not follow us, it would be long enough before we should go to this rock:

Christ follows the soul with divine grace as the soul stands in need of it. The rock smitten by Moses supplied the Israelites, and Christ smitten by the curse of the law supplies the church, not with earthly water, but with heavenly rivers of grace and comfort, following believers not for a time, but indifferently and for ever. Christ told the woman of Samaria, *He that drinketh of this water, it shall be a well of water springing up unto eternal life. I am the resurrection from the dead*, the resurrection from the death of sin, and also the life of the soul, to live in and upon Christ. *He that believes in me shall never die*, no death shall lay hold on him to ruin him, nor separate him from God; and though death come on the body, he is said never to die, because he shall live for ever. Therefore the saint in Christ every day he lives, he is living so upon Christ, that he is daily getting on his way to glory, and is nearer to heaven and happiness. Christ saith, *Because I live, ye shall live also*: If the root die the branches must needs die; but the root cannot die, and the branches shall not die; while the root lives the branches shall not die: Therefore in John xv. he saith, That he is the vine, and the believer is the branch; that is the reason the soul that lives in Christ, and one in Christ must needs live a flourishing and increasing life, because Christ is the vital fountain of life, to keep the soul of a believer flourishing and green at the root; it shall not be like the barren hypocrite or barren apostate.

Secondly, Christ is said to come down as rain upon his church and people, to keep them watered, to keep them fresh and flourishing. Now you must note, there must be a good root, a living root, or otherwise all the rain that is, will do no good to the soul. Col. i. 19. *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*; as he is the vital fountain from whence their life is deriyed, so is he manifesting his grace to them, and so is said to come down as rain on them, in Psal. lxxii. This Psalm was penned when David was on his death-bed, and he orders Solomon to be crowned, he speaks of Solomon, "Give the king thy judgment, O Lord, " and thy righteousness unto the king's son : " And then he speaks prophetically of Christ and of his kingdom, " He shall judge thy people with " righteousness and thy poor with judgment ; " the mountains shall bring peace to the peo- " ple, and the little hills by righteousness. He " shall judge the poor of the people, he shall " save the children of the needy, and shall " break in pieces the oppressor. They shall " fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure " throughout all generation." Now that cannot be spoke of Solomon, that must be of Christ. Then verse 6. " He shall come down like rain " upon the mown grass, and as showers that " water the earth ; in his days shall righteousness flourish, and abundance of peace so long as " the moon endureth." Speaking of the prosperity and glory of Christ's kingdom under the gospel : *He shall come down as rain.* While

there is rain from heaven there will be fruits on earth; while Christ is rain to a believer he shall never die, though there may be some limitations, and some restraints in his exercise of grace, yet he shall not die.

First, Christ came down in his incarnation; when he came to take our nature upon him, he descended from the bosom of his Father, descended from the crown to the cradle, from the glory of his Father to the manger, from angels and glorified saints to converse with poor man.

Mr. Robinson's.
Christ all in all

Secondly, He came to live here an humble and debased life; he came here to bear our infirmities, and to take our sicknesses.

Thirdly, He came down very low; when the blessed Lord of glory came to the cross; when he that was the fountain of all life must die the cursed death of the cross.

Fourthly, He comes down in descending into the hearts of his people by his Holy Spirit, in the revelation of his divine grace; he comes down when he reveals from heaven his blessed grace and consolation to his people: The river of life that is above, drops down many sweet drops into the soul. When a believer is gasping and thinking, I will hear this sermon and die; will God ever speak peace or comfort? As the woman, she would bake her cake, eat it, and die; but when that was gone she had a supply. The believer is ready under doubts and fears to say, hath God forgot to be gracious? but he hath a supply from that river that

comes from the throne of God. Rev. xxi. 1. *And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as chrystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of his Lamb.* He shewed me a pure river; there is in Christ no impurity; he is the Lamb of God without spot; what he gives to his people are pure mercies, choice mercies, pure blessings: when we drink of other streams they are mixed with mud; all your comforts

below, yea all ordinances and duties are mixed with corruption;

but Christ is the pure river; it is a river, no small brook, but a river, running, flowing and always flowing, giving and always giving. It is not only a river flowing, but waters of life to the soul that lives on Christ. Those that drink of this water of life shall never die: He that desires to drink of these waters of life, that thirsts for them, cannot but live; they are as clear as chrystal. That is an emblem of the saints life, a life of grace, and life of glory. Here we have these waters in ordinances through pipes; here we see them through a glass, but there you will see them face to face; there the saints shall solace themselves as celestial fishes in that pure river. In ordinances we have some sweet drops and streams, Psal. xlv. the church being under trouble, speaks of her help in God, *Though the faith be removed*, that is, though there is a change of times and revolution of things, *though the mountains be carried into the sea, we will not fear*: So though we have many temptations

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many troubles; though we have many discouragements we will not fear; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof: There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. This shews forth, in the letter, the tabernacle, where the presence of God was, and his glory appeared. Though we have swelling waves, great temptations; great troubles, yet we have a stream that makes glad the city of God, for God is in the midst of her: He was in the midst of Jerusalem that was called the city of the great king. Psal. xlviii. 1, 2. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Sion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king.* So that the city of Jerusalem where the king of glory had his dwelling place, where he met his people between the cherubims and the mercy-seat. God did well in the tabernacle in Jerusalem, but Christ is the glorious temple wherein the god-head dwells, being in the midst of his church by a divine union, is their life in the midst of their troubles: Here are sweet streams that flow from him. There is a river, and this river is in the midst of her: Christ is in the midst of his church, watering of his church, giving new streams to it daily, that makes glad the heart of his people. How does rain rejoice the heart of the husband-man in a dry time when it comes unexpected? So a believer re-

ceives the streams of comfort unexpected under the ordinances. An experimental believer longs to be under the enjoyments of all ordinances, and would be hindred from none, though the heart may be backward to duty. A poor believer will cry to the Lord in secret, Lord, let not this wicked heart hinder me; it may be I may have a stream from Christ that may refresh my thirsty soul, and make it glad; for Christ is in the midst of his people, and my soul desires to enjoy him, my soul desires to live upon him: There is a river makes glad the city of God, the church of God. And why may not my soul receive comfort? Thus Jesus Christ comes as rain from heaven to make glad the city of God: Though there are swelling waves of temptation and trouble, there are streams that make glad this city. The wrath of God is made known from heaven to unbelievers, and his love is made known from heaven to believers; though indeed the believer may not always have the comfort of it. But the believer that lives on Christ, whose desires, and thirstings, and ends and aims are, that in all he may enjoy Christ: I say, when they are under fears and doubts, they seem to be in a withering state, but when Christ, as the rain descends down, the believer is revived and refreshed. As Gideon's fleece was wet when the ground was dry, so hath a believer heavenly enjoyment and communion with Christ when all the world is barren. When the believer is under fear, and saith, I fear, I am a withered plant, that I am

not watered : Saith the Lord, *He shall come down as rain.* If we ask many, where is your comfort ? They will tell you, here and there. But say to a believer, where is your expectation ? My hope is laid up in Christ, my expectation is from him. To such saith God, *he shall come down as rain,* that is, with the Spirit revealing his love and grace to the soul, as rain comes from the clouds : So through the clouds of darkness doth Christ reveal his grace to poor dark doubting saints.

When the Lord Jesus poureth out his holy Spirit into poor doubting souls, to comfort and refresh the weary and heavy laden soul, to give a testimony of the love of God to your souls ; the efficacy of God's holy Spirit revives the saints, and begets life in dead sinners ; Christ comes down to them and causes them to live that never lived before. Indeed I confess there Christ is wonderfully beyond all showers of rain ? for if we plant and sow, rain brings it up ; but Christ brings up seed, brings forth fruit where it was never before. So saith the prophet, Isa. xxxii. from the 12th to the 16th. *They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers ; yea upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city ; because the palaces shall be forsaken, the multitude of the city shall be left, the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks : Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high,*

I

and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. This indeed was literally spoken of the captivity of the Jews; saith he, *All their pleasant places shall be filled with desolation and their palaces forsaken.* How long? until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high. But how should this be? Why it might be supposed that the Spirit of the Lord came on Cyrus, and those that gave the Jews liberty to go and build the city of God. But shall we think that this is the whole? No, every sinner that lives upon the face of the earth is a barren desolate wretched creature till the Spirit of God is poured upon him. How long shall these sinners continue so? *Until the Spirit of the Lord be poured from on high.* And what then? Why then this wilderness shall become a fruitful field, the wilderness becomes a garden or field. The old ignorant poor carnal sinner becomes now a gracious saint. Doth he stand at a stay? No, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest?

When the Spirit of the Lord comes down, then the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is counted for a forest. Many professors there are that hear Christ preached, hear what it is to live upon Christ, but they, not knowing Christ, not having the Spirit of God poured out upon them, are the same as ever they were. Now how long will it be that you will hear of Christ, and not live on Christ? I can tell you, until the Spirit of the Lord be poured upon you from on high, until

the Spirit be revealed from on high, signifies a plentiful communication of the Spirit ; it hath a respect to the times of the Gospel ; for altho' God gave his Spirit in some measure before, yet he poured it not before he was first anointed with his fulness ; a larger measure of God's Spirit is now given than was before. Then we shall return and say, Lord, the wilderness is become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is counted for a forest ; but the mean time you sit concerned, while you send us home mourning ; you sit on your seats unconcerned, and go home so, but your poor minister goes with sorrow to the Lord.

How long, Lord, shall I preach before one soul be converted by my ministry ?
how long shall I teach before one sinner is converted ? the Lord answers,
until my Spirit be poured out upon them from on high. Many sermons may be poured out, and hearts and lives of ministers poured out, before your souls are converted, except the Spirit of God be poured out upon you. How much do they err that tell you, if you will you may believe ; and that there is no such thing as an irresistible power put forth ? but let them that know Christ, speak, whether the Arminians speak truth or no. You know you were barren before the Spirit of God came ; you that are rushed into a profession of religion, that are barren, dead, and carnal, and live so still ; I profess you are in a miserable condition, you never did know Christ ; if you did, you

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would lead other kind of lives ; but those that have received Christ, that live upon Christ, and thirst for Christ, Christ comes down and revives them with new showers from heaven, Isa. xliv. 3, 4, 5. *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground : I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring : and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses.* One shall say, *I am the Lord's ;* and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob ; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel. These words call for your attention ; the beginning is, Jacob was afraid he was forsaken of God ; Israel of old was under discouragements ; and the evangelical prophet preacheth to all the Israelites of God, ver. 1. “Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant, and Israel whom I have chosen : Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee ; fear not, O Jacob my servant, and thou Jerusalem whom I have chosen.” We see here plainly, that which many of our age do deny, God's choosing of one more than another. God lays the foundation of Israel's comfort in his peculiar choice of them. Israel whom I have chosen : If God hath not chosen Israel, what is all blessings or mercies ? but Lord, if I am chosen, yet I am under trouble, straits and fears. Saith God, *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground ; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring : that is, all*

that are in Christ: If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed; and what then; they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses; by the water-side they shall grow, I shall see my people grow: And what then? One shall say, who shall say? why the poor doubting soul, that hath long cried out, O that I could but know Christ were mine! O that I could but make mention of him as my Lord and my Redeemer! My soul even faints with expectation, for his loving-kindness to be revealed! What, shall these flourish, and grow, and thrive; yes, they shall. One shall say, *I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord.* When the Spirit of the Lord is poured out, then the soul comes to have the revelation of the love of God to it. Before he was drooping, hanging down his head, fearing himself a withered soul. But now saith the soul, when I read the love of God, I can subscribe myself the Lord's, and I can call myself by the name of the God of Jacob. I will set heart and hand to it; as that good holy man of God Mr. Peacock said, Let it be preached at my funeral, that I am no cast away. How comes this about? A poor soul, longing for Christ, waiting for him, desiring nothing more than to live in Christ, and with Christ, yet under much doubt and fear. Why? the believer wanted these heavenly showers to be poured out, the

testimony of the Spirit: But when the Spirit is poured out, saith the soul, I can call myself by the name of Jacob, and subscribe with my hand, I am the Lord's. Say to a believer, what dost thou desire, soul? Nothing more than to live to Christ, nothing more than to enjoy Christ, nothing below him will content me: Where will you wait there? Where the Lord comes: And how long? Till the Spirit of the Lord is poured out; and then I shall call myself by the name of the Lord, and not be ashamed.

This hath relation to the righteous and gracious act of God in delivering a righteous and oppressed nation from cruel tyrants and oppressors. This work shall be so great and illustrious, as if God had rained down showers of righteousness out of heaven. But this is not all the meaning, the mystery of the sinner's glorious redemption through Christ is here included, and also God's gracious act of righteousness, Isa. xlv. 8. "Drop down ye heavens
 " from above, let the skies pour down righte-
 " ousness, let the earth open, and let them
 " bring forth salvation, and let righteousness
 " spring up together; I the Lord have created
 " it." Here is the Lord's command, and the church's prayer, drop down ye heavens. *Let the skies pour down righteousness.* The Lord commands it, the church and prophet prays for it. When a poor believer is praying, sighing, looking up to Heaven, O that I might have a glimpse this day of the love of God! O that I did but

know that I were redeemed by thy blood ! Saith the Lord, *drop down ye heavens.* For until the Spirit of the Lord come, there will be cold hearing and praying until the Lord reveal himself to the poor sinner. A poor doubting soul in his own imaginations is undone. God's delivering his people from temporal miseries, was but a drop in comparison of his giving Christ for poor sinners to satisfy divine justice ; then he poured down righteousness ! Saith the Lord, you shall not want a righteousness : I will send down a righteousness to that soul. *Drop down ye heavens, and let the skies pour down righteousness :* As the sky when it is clear gives light, so does the Lord by his Spirit reveal to the soul his interest in Jesus Christ, and his love to his soul. That is a poor life indeed, or profession, that you live on yourself, and your own performances, and not on Christ. You see when Christ comes down, he comes with the power of his Spirit on the hearts of sinners in their conversion, and on saints in their desertion, and then you shall go away rejoicing. O with what chearful hearts have many gone from an ordinance ! They have been complaining in the morning, and have been rejoicing in the afternoon. And how comes this ? Did it lie in the power of a man ? Could an earthen vessel give this ? No, the heavens dropt down ; and then what praising and blessing God is there in the soul, when the Spirit of God in the word is poured out on a poor believer that was in fears and doubts ? While the

hypocrite never questions nor fears his condition. The believer fears nothing more than decaying, though he is established that he shall never fall from Christ, yet he would not be barren : As it is the desire of a believer to be glorified with Christ, so to glorify Christ while on the earth. Here a believer hath many fears and doubts ; First, he fears that God is not reconciled to him ; but the Spirit of the Lord comes to water the poor drooping soul. Christ manifests to the soul, that God is reconciled : *I am at peace with thee*, saith the Lord, Isa. xxvii. 2, 3, 4, 5. *In that day sing unto her, a vineyard of red wine.* Truly it is red wine must make the sinner's peace ; it is the red blood of Christ, a bleeding Redeemer must give peace unto the doubting believer. *Sing ye unto her, a vineyard of red wine ;* redemption through the blood of Christ is the sweetest song that ever sinners can hear : It is not a vineyard to work in, but a vineyard to sing in, a vineyard of red wine ; without this red wine, our red sins would undo our poor guilty souls : But Lord, how shall I know that this red wine, this blood of Christ, is made mine ? How shall I know that I am reconciled by the blood of Christ ? Saith God, *I will water it, I will pour out my Spirit to reveal it and manifest it.* And what then, Lord, shall I know ? “ Fury is not “ in me, who would set the briers and thorns “ against me in battle ? I would go through “ them, I would burn them together : ” You shall know that I am a reconciled God unto

you ; I am at peace with thee ; How shall I be at peace with thee ? Saith God in the fifth verse, " Let him take hold of my strength that " he may make peace with me, and he shall " be at peace with me." In that day sing ye unto her a vineyard of red wine. Saith the Lord, I will sing her a song ; every sermon you hear of the love of Christ is a song to every doubting believer.

When poor souls come to have the Spirit of the Lord poured out upon them, to reveal that God is reconciled unto them, then the soul goes on in the ways of God chearfully ; before the believer was doubting, fearing, and questioning.

But what dost thou desire, O soul ? I desire nothing more, I crave nothing more, than to enjoy Christ. Then saith God ; I will sing you a song under the gospel, the Lord does not come to call you to Mount Sinai, he doth not speak with terror and horror ; but he comes to sing a glorious song of redemption, that is, red wine to poor undone sinners, and to poor doubting saints : But I tell you, we may sing and preach till we come to the grave, and not one soul be converted and brought home to God, except the Spirit of the Lord come and work with us. For I durst speak it, if I could but have acquaintance with you to know your minds, there is not any one of you that will draw near to God, while you think God is an enemy unto you ; but if any thing draws you to God, it must be the song of red wine, re-

demption through the blood of Christ. And then as for the drooping faint, he is afraid to come before God while he is under his fear and trouble; then what shall I do, Lord? Take hold of my strength, that is, on Christ, and be at peace with me. The Spirit of the Lord reveals to the soul a reconciled God, that God is at peace with them, and hath pardoned all their sins. But before the soul cries, What am I, an unpardoned soul, I am afraid I shall meet my sins, that they will stare me in the face another day. O that I did but know that Christ was mine! That my sins were forgiven me! That I had but the love of God in Christ! I have been looking, saith the soul, when God will come and say, *Thy sins are forgiven thee.* David, Psal. xxxii. was greatly troubled, and said, *The Lord's hand lay day and night heavy upon me: And how is it now, I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* I found great comfort, I had a sweet shower, Christ came down as rain upon my soul, God revealed his pardoning grace. I said, *I will confess my transgression unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* What, was David's sin never forgiven before? Yes, all his transgressions were done away, and his soul was pure in the sight of God, through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. But David had doubts on his soul, fear on his soul, he had a summer's drought; would I had a shower of mercy: I confess I

am a poor wretched creature, I am a vile sinner. I will now look to the Lord; and he did not look in vain. Are not believers sins pardoned? Yes, they shall never be remembered more, but the believer doth not know this always; and when he does not know it, he begins to cry out, is thy mercy clean gone? But then he calls to mind, *this is my infirmity*: Then he cries to the Lord, and in comes pardoning mercy, *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*. O what a refreshing shower is this! It is this I have looked for, longed for, waited for. Then next saith the soul, I desire nothing more than to enjoy Christ, yet I am so unrighteous, I question whether his righteousness be mine: Now comes the Lord by his Spirit, and reveals to the soul, that it hath a righteousness to stand before the Lord in. Now the soul can say, *The Lord my righteousness*. 1 Cor. i. 30. *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; he is made of God to me*. O now he is made *the Lord my righteousness*. How shall I know this? The Spirit of the Lord reveals this to the saints in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now I can go boldly to God, and ask mercy boldly of God. Psal. cxxvi. 4. *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south*: As the streams in the south refresh the dry and barren ground, so does the righteousness of Christ revealed comfort my soul. How barren was I in duty! I was afraid to come to God, I was afraid whether my wanderings

would not cause God to turn me out of his presence; but God hath prepared Christ to be my righteousness, therefore in him I come without spot. Indeed when I am out of frame, it is without comfort to myself, but I have always righteousness before God, I have always boldness to the throne of grace through Christ. Many prayers that have been made when I was out of frame, have been no small trouble to my soul; but when it was revealed to me, that Christ was my righteousness, that he was made sin for me, that *I might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. that is, tho' Christ was a man without sin in himself, yet our sin was imputed to him, and he was by God reckoned as a sinner; and then he kills him, putting our curse upon him; so that to us that are free, Christ was made so, that God looks on us as if we had performed perfect righteousness, and when that is done, he saves us. You that have lived and not made Christ your righteousness, you will want a righteousness when you come to die: But they that have made Christ their righteousness, though their sins be as heaps of sand, yet through the righteousness of Christ you will stand as spotless before God, as if you had never sinned. Now, how do you know this to be your righteousness? Why, the Spirit of God reveals this to your souls, and you can as boldly call him, the Lord your righteousness, as you can call your house and land, or any thing you enjoy, your own. If you go to God in Christ, what-

ever is needful for you, you shall as surely have it as if you had it already. Then next, the Spirit of Christ flowing from the heart of a believer, gives the believer sweet communion with God. The soul thinks it is at a distance from God, the Spirit comes down in a sweet shower, and brings it near to God. O, saith the soul, that I could but enter within the vail to have communion with God! But methinks God and I stand at a distance; he is in heaven, and I am (as it were) in hell: I am as one forgotten; though I lay claim to him as my God, I would have the knowledge of him that he is my God, and *God of my salvation*, Psal. lxxxviii. *O God of my Salvation, let my prayer come before thee, incline thine ear to my cry, for my soul is full of trouble.* Sometimes a believer is full of trouble. And what is next? *And my life draweth nigh unto the grave, I am counted with them that go down into the pit.* That is dreadful when the fear of death and of hell meet together. I am as a man that hath no strength to believe, yet I have some glimmerings that thou art the God of my salvation: but death and hell is approaching to me in my apprehension: wilt thou shew wonders to the dead; shall the dead live? Is it not possible I should live? Shall I have a shower of mercy? shall thy loving kindness be declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall I have a shower upon my dying soul? Shall I be brought to have communion with God? Thus when the Lord seems to

stand at a distance from the soul, he comes down in a shower by his Spirit, that he finds very familiar communion with God: Therefore the apostle, when he prays for the Corinthians, he prays, *That the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God the Father, may be communicated unto them by the Holy Ghost, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen.* The grace of Christ your life, the love of God in Christ, communicated to you through the Holy Ghost: So when the love of God is come down on the soul, then the soul comes to have sweet communion with God; before the soul was afraid to come to God; but now it can say, *Lord, thou knowest me, and I know thee; Lord, thou knowest what is in me, and what thou hast wrought in me.* Thus the soul goes on knowing and being known: So the soul is carried on in this sweet frame, with that familiar sweet communion with God, that the soul wishes it might always be employed in God's service. Again, When Christ is revealed by the Spirit to the soul, the soul comes to know its adoption, that it can and doth know God to be his Father, the Spirit of the Lord poured out, crying, *Abba Father. Gal. iv. 4, 5, 6. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* Christ comes to redeem us, the Holy Spirit comes to reveal to the soul that you are no more

servants, but sons, that we might receive the adoption of sons: Sons of God, redeemed by Christ's blood; but the soul seems to be doubting whether it be so or no. Well, saith the apostle, *because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father.* O what would many a poor doubting soul give to call God Father! Though many a wretch calls God Father. But a poor believer, if all the world were given him to be his portion, he would trample on all to call God Father in deed and in truth; to go to God as a Father, to have God for my Father, that glorious God that made heaven and earth, that glorious God that turns men to destruction, and saith, come again ye children of men, who feeds the saints above with eternal pleasure: This God I can call my God, my Father, my portion; my portion living, my portion dying; a portion beyond all the world. This God, by the Spirit, the soul comes to know to be his Father, and the soul is never well but when he is speaking to his Father, there is such a converse between the Father and the child. Again, The Spirit when it comes with its revealing evidence, comforts the drooping soul, that Jesus Christ is everlasting life to him. They that live on Christ shall have everlasting life from Christ. The believer hath many sweet and comfortable showers, many precious drops flowing into his soul, that he can witness the prophesy is come to pass. The prophet Joel saith, Joel iii. 18. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the*

mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the Rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth from the house of the Lord. The prophet alludes to those waters that were conveyed from some spring through conduit pipes towards the altar, Ezek. xlvii. 1, 2, 3. for the use of the temple, in which water the priests washed what was to be washed. This no doubt is a shadow of the purifying blood of Christ, and his sanctifying Spirit and word; and in that it is said to come from the Lord, it intimateth that these glad tidings, this saving grace shall be first preached from Jerusalem, and by the church, which is the house of God, shall be published to others. The valley of Shittim that this fountain shall water, the meaning is, it shall refresh, purge and make fruitful all holy works. It was on the plain of Moab, on the borders of Israel, toward the south-east, Numb. xxxiii. 49. Josh. iii. 1. not far from the red sea. These waters shall flow down to the dry and thirsty, the barren and fruitless Gentiles, and make them fruitful. And it shall come to pass in that day, in the day of the gospel, in that day that a soul believes in Christ; what shall come to pass? In that day the mountains shall drop down new wine, the new wine of the gospel, not the old lees of the law, but wine upon the lees. The law may fret and grind your spirits to powder, but what can melt them but the covenant of grace? Isa. xxv. New wine, new comforts, new peace and joy; that the law could never bring, Christ brings; and

the hills that flow with milk ; the glorious promises of the gospel, that shall be as milk to the poor soul, milk to poor babes in Christ. But then a poor soul may object, truly I have desired Christ, if I know my own heart I would fain live upon Christ ; but yet I find my heart very barren, I do not find my soul flourishing, nor increasing, nor growing, but I find comforts are absent from my soul, that I may say still, the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me. To this I answer, soul, you that desire Christ, nothing in the world is like Christ to you ; you shall not miss of growth in grace, you shall not miss of this blessed life ; though the Lord may not give it to you according to your measures, but according to his own good will, grace and wisdom ; for God hath very glorious ends that you have not your vessels full at once.

The first reason is, that you may depend upon Jesus Christ for daily incomes and supplies. Alas ! while you are in this life your vessels are always filling, and you are always to live in a way of dependance on Christ, not only for that grace you have received, but for daily manifestation of grace to your souls, for the grace of faith, and for the love of God to your souls. You are to wait daily on the Lord for strength. *Not I live, saith Paul ; I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith of the Son of God,* Gal. ii. 20, I depend on Christ for all, I live

by the faith of the Son of God; and one that lives by faith does not live by sight. There is something absent that a man waits for; for what we enjoy what need we hope for, and what need we act faith for what we possess? We are to depend on the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to act faith in him for new supplies of grace. We are to set ourselves under those golden pipes that do convey the golden oyl; you are to be looking to the everlasting hills from whence your help comes, as the Psalmist saith, Psal. cxxiii. 22. "Behold as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us." Psal. cxxi. 1. *I will lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.* The hills where the temple was built, Sion and Moriah, there will I look, from whence comes my help: now we must look up to God in Christ for supplies of grace, and peace and comfort; we are to expect our comfort from those mountains that drop down new wine, and the hills that drop down milk; the skies that pour down righteousness, and the heavens that rain down grace. Were your comforts always flourishing and green, were you always filled with joy, would there be such a dependance on Christ, where you are daily supplied and renewed? When persons are waiting for rain they set their vessels forth day and night, and when they are full they take them in again; but persons that turn the cock and let it run in-

to their cisterns, it fills them presently, they wait no longer. Alas ! many run to their own cisterns, their own duties, walk by the sparks of their own kindling, to what they can perform, which the Lord complains of, Jer. ii. 1. *My people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living water, and hewed to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.* Alas ! their cisterns will not hold water, their vessels will quickly be empty again ; but the soul that waits on Christ will be like the husbandman that waits for rain, he is glad when he seeth the clouds are gathering ; the husbandman is glad, he looks on his withered grass and corn, but, saith he, the clouds begin to gather, and I wait for rain, and that will revive them again : so saith a poor soul, I do expect, yea, I do wait for the Lord to come with new light, new love, new peace, new comfort, and new assurance of his love, and that I may read my pardon in his blood, and my comfort in his love. Saith the Lord, *I will be a dew to Israel,* Hos. xiv. 5. In the mystical and spiritual sense it signifies Christ, who doth by his holy word and heavenly grace drop down and distil upon the soul of believers by his princely favours and loving countenance, which is as a cloud of the latter rain : that which dew is to fields, gardens, vineyards, flowers, and fruits of the earth after a hot and scorching day ; that the favour, word, grace, loving countenance and holy spirit will be

Dr. Reynolds.

to the drooping and afflicted conscience of his people.

A believer hath his dependance on the Lord Jesus Christ, who is appearing before God for him, pleading the sinner's cause, presenting his own wounds before the Father, till he pours down his grace into the soul, and drops down showers of grace into the heart. But a soul that feeds himself with his own gifts and parts, he does his duty, and is gone, therefore he does not wait for, nor depend on Christ. But, saith a believer, I would be in a believing frame, though I do not find Christ coming, I will look up, Psal. v. 1, 2, 3. *Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my king and my God, for unto thee will I pray. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* There are many go to their own cisterns in the morning, performing duty, exercising what gifts and parts they have, or what they remember; they do duty, but it may be think not on Christ one moment more all the day: These are poor empty cisterns that can hold no water: But, saith the Psalmist, *I will pray and look up*; though I am come off from my knees, I have not done looking up, expecting or believing, for I wait for the Lord's answer, I look for a return of prayer, I look for supplies of grace, for supports of faith, for comforts to my soul. Many pray, but do you look up, do you believe do you make Christ your life, depending on him for

the showers of his grace to come into your souls? That may comfort you, and quicken you, and may be matter of praise, not only that you may quiet conscience, but that you may enjoy God. When the earth is dry, if a drop does but fall, our hearts begin to be glad, we hope to have showers from heaven: So when a soul finds but a drop of comfort, a drop of love, a little taste. Saith the soul, Christ is coming, now he is revealing himself; I will depend upon him as long as I live; as Job saith, *Though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee*; so saith the soul, I will depend on thee: And as Luther said, *Though Christ come against me with a drawn sword, yet will I run into his arms.*

Secondly, The second reason is, that as you should depend on Christ, so you should be waiting in the way of duty, waiting in ordinances. What confusions have come into the minds of persons, throwing off ordinances; pretending they had the light within them, and were come to perfection, and had no need of teaching, pretending they knew more than could be taught them? But speak with a believer, he will tell you another thing, he will tell you he wants comfort, he wants grace, he wants teaching, and that he wants new reviving, Isa. xxvi. 8. "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my

“ spirit within me will I seek thee early; yea,
“ in the way of thy judgments have we wait-
“ ed for thee:” Though thy hand hath been
as it were against us, though thou hast seem-
ed to frown upon us, yet we have waited for
thee; though it be dark with us, whether it
be the night of affliction or the night of deser-
tion, as well as in the night of trouble and ad-
versity; though our souls are in an afflicted
state, or a discomfited state, we will wait till
thou return; we will wait for that God that
hides himself from the house of Jacob: Not
like some that are seeking purer churches
through the deceiving of Satan and their own
hearts. Many there are that think they have
knowledge enough, and peace enough; but
these are the delusions of Satan, that they may
not wait upon God in the way of his appoint-
ment: they think they need no more teaching.
But the Lord will not leave his people to these
delusions; for they shall, through his grace,
be so kept; they shall be kept waiting on him
in his ordinances and appointments; so from
ordinance to ordinance, from duty to duty,
carried on from strength to strength. If you
had a full harvest presently, you would be rea-
dy for glory; and if your vessel were filled
here, you would be ready for an immortal
life; you would be ready for your life to be
swallowed up in victory; as when you are dis-
tilling aqua vitæ, or any other spirits, you set
a bottle under it, and that drops in drop by
drop, and when it is full you tak it away; and

if it had been filled at once you would have took it away. The Lord Jesus Christ could fill the vessel at once : But what then ? Could you contain your joy ? You must enter into the joy of your Lord. When the bottle is full it is taken away, it can hold no more ; so when a soul is filled with grace, and comfort, and assurance : What is he fit for but glory ? To go to enjoy God in that full measure that the saints and angels do ? But you have mercy distilled out, some drops in one sermon, and some in another, that your souls may be still filling up till you are fit for glory : If you were full at once, you would not need any more ordinances. But now the soul saith, I bless God for his ordinances, for I have received some comfort by them ; O that I had a full assurance ! O that I could see more of Christ ! O that I were perfect in Christ ! O that I could love him as the saints do that are in glory ! If you could, then you need not come any more to ordinances. You see in a cloud a bright side and a dark side, in ordinances you have peace and joy : Ay, and you have temptation, that you may long for another ordinance, that you may have peace and comfort : so you are led from ordinance to ordinance, you are led from duty to duty, till you are brought to glory. So when you have received some revelations of Christ, you long for ordinances again, that you may receive more : I say, a sincere believer that waits upon the Lord Jesus Christ, that waits for a shower from heaven, he may see,

that in every complaint he hath cause to rejoice; he must needs see something; though he has a dark cloud, he cannot but say, truly he hopes to see a bright cloud also: He cannot but own that he hath some glimmering of hope that were never found before. Conversion, that was never found in a carnal heart: as sometimes the Lord is pleased in an ordinance to give unto the soul at one time one promise, and at another time another. If a man had a field of corn, and should thresh and grind it at once, could he eat it all at once? No, but a little and a little at a time: So the field of the promises is a large field, when you come to glory, all the fields will be bound up, and all the promises will be accomplished, and you will have your souls in that glorious paradise of perfect blessedness. But now the Lord is pleased to drop in one promise at one time, and another at another. The poor woman of Canaan desired to be under Christ's table to be fed with crumbs. They that wait on Christ for crumbs, shall not miss of having their fill at last. A poor soul in Christ gets at one time one promise, and at another time another, and so is carried on till the harvest is white; when you are ripe for glory, there will be a perfect accomplishment of all the promises; but in the mean time we must wait for those great and precious promises, 2 Pet. i. 4. "Hereby are
" given to us exceeding great and precious pro-
" mises, that by these you might be partakers
" of the divine nature:" Exceeding great and

precious promises, but these promises drop down as you have need ; *hereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises*, great incomparable grace, love and mercy are wrapt up in them, at one time one, and another time another is dropt into the soul. The sons and daughters of Sion that wait on God in a way of duty, O the sweet and precious promises that they have given them ! As Ruth followed Boaz's feet at night. To spiritualize this, who was Ruth but a poor Gentile ? she was a Moabitish woman. O how good it is to be waiting ! It is the believer's duty to be waiting on the word, and all the means of grace, and what should he do at night ? Lie down at Christ's feet, leave him not till you are married to him, nor then, till you are brought home to glory, while you enjoy him fully : So I say, wait on him gleaning in his field, and you shall have sweet divine comfort and consolation from him at last.

Secondly, As for promise, so for quickening your hearts by his Spirit, when you cry with David, Psal. cxix. 25. *Quicken me, for my soul cleaveth to the dust.* The Lord is pleased sometimes to come in with quickening grace to your souls, that you find your heart quickened and revived like a dry tree or plant after rain : So the soul complains, I am like a barren wilderness, I do not find my heart ascend up to God, my heart is even cleaving to the dust, but he desires quickening ; *Quicken thou me, according*

to thy word ; thou hast promised quickening grace, therefore I wait for quickenings : So a soul saith, O that I had Christ ! Could but my soul taste him ! Could my soul experience his revivings ! And in waiting have you not found his quickenings, when you have confessed your soul was free among the dead ?

Again, Have you not found new strength to believe in Christ ? You have gone home sometimes, and said in your hearts, I will never doubt more, I will never give way to unbelief more, I will never to my dying hour misbelieve the promises of God, *for his promises are sure, and his mercies never fail.* I could sing with the psalmist, *Praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever ; praise the Lord, for his goodness never fails :* And can witness what the Psalmist saith, Psal. cxxxviii. 2, 3. *I will worship towards thy holy temple, and praise thy name, for thy loving kindness and for thy truth ; for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name ; in the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul. In the day that I cried. that I waited upon thee, immediately I had new strength from thee : When my heart was faint, when my soul was in a languishing condition, I cried unto thee, and thou strengthenedst me with strength in my soul ; I had strength to believe, I had strength to wait, I had strength to hope, and I had strength to live upon Christ for all. Have you not experienced this, that you have come weak to an ordinance, yet have found strength, as one that*

hath drank new wine? Therefore the Lord is pleased to give you strength, that you may go from duty to duty, from mercy to mercy, from peace to peace. O you that wait on Christ in a way of dependence for new reviving, and new manifestations to your souls, what comfort will it be to you, though you have little strength, to go from strength to strength? The Lord hath promised it, Psal. lxxxiv. *They shall go from strength to strength till they appear before God in Sion.* This was spoken of the willing Israelites; many tarried at home to worship Jeroboam's gods, they would not come to Jerusalem, the journey was too far, and the cost and pains too much; they would rather serve the calves that Jeroboam had set up: But the godly Israelites went to Jerusalem; and what did the Lord do for them? See vers. 5. *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the ways of them;* whose heart is found believing and waiting for Christ, whose heart is united to Christ, and found waiting in his appointments: What then? They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Sion appeareth before God; not one shall faint by the way; every one shall appear before God in Sion if they have never so far to go, as sure as if they had but a mile to go: So it is in this day of our gospel worship, in our waiting on Christ in the means; the soul saith, I have many duties on my hand to perform, and I do not know how to do them; but if your soul desires to believe in Christ, to live in Christ, to rest upon Christ, to wait on him

in his ordinances, you shall go from strength to strength; you shall every one come to glory, tho' you go through the valley of Bacca; tho' you have dark places, and barren places, you shall have wells of Salvation, and they shall refresh your souls. Christ will be dropping his comforts and grace, that you shall be filled with comfort; you shall go from strength to strength, till you appear before God.

Again, As for your strength, so for your victory and conquest over corruption: have not you found in your waiting, that the life of Christ hath been manifest in the death of your corruptions, in your conquest, that when you have cried out, O wretched man or woman! O how unfit to wait on Christ? O how dark and dead am I! Yet have not you through the grace of Christ, found the life of Christ made manifest, that you have gone away conquering and victorious? Though you desire to live upon Christ, yet you have not brim full of him at once, but do receive your joy and comfort from him drop by drop, that you may live on Christ in the way of his appointments.

Thirdly, The third reason is, that your souls shall not be filled as you desire, but drop by drop, because we are not able to bear much of God's glory at once, we shall be over-set with the feast if it be too much, we are not able to drink much of this new wine, it is a joy unspeakable and full of glory: therefore the saints are called to enter into the joy of their Lord, because this glory is unspeakable, and cannot

enter into them, as good Mr. Welch, when he was in prayer and communion with God, hold Lord, saith he, it is enough. So the spouse complains of being sick of love, not for an absent Christ, but for the great enjoyment. Cant. ii. 4. *He brought me into his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.* What then? *Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love.* But in the 5th chapter she was sick of love for an absent Christ, for a withdrawn Christ; not absent in union, then she could not be sick of love, nor for communion, but over-set with manifestations, not in that manner as she enjoyed when she sat under his shadow in the third chapter, that she tasted his fruit to be sweet, for then she had it by degrees, but here in more abundant manner, verse 3. *As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.* While the fruit drops from the tree, the spouse could eat it, taste it, relish it, and that with delight, and was not over-set with it; but she wants more communion. “He brought me into his banqueting-house to the love-feast, there his banner over me was love.”

First, You see a believer, in a state of grace, cannot move one foot till Christ move him; how much less can a soul that is in a state of sin move after Christ? Christ brings a soul on from lesser to greater enjoyments, from lesser

to greater manifestations ; “ he brought me into his banqueting house,” where it was sweet to sit, where I had an apple, a drop of love, a taste of his grace : But *he brought me*, I could not get thither of myself ; “ he brought me to his banqueting house ;” what sauce to the feast ? “ His banner over me was love :” What would have been the banquet without the banner of love ? “ His banner over me was love.” What then ? I was made so much of, filled with such joy, such comfort ; filled with such assurance, filled with such delight, that she was fain to cry out, “ Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples ;” my narrow vessel will not hold it, I must have new strength. “ Stay me with flagons,” new wine, that is, the thing containing for the thing contained in it. By flagons is meant the wine contained in the flagons, as we speak in the Lord’s supper : We say this cup is the New Testament in his blood, that is, the wine in the cup. So here, the spouse, “ Stay me with flagons,” I have such a love feast, I want flagons of wine to strengthen me ; yea, and let me have some of the apples too, that before dropt from the tree, I am sick of love. Do you not wish sometimes, O that I were filled with Christ ! O that I could praise him, love him, behold his face, and enjoy him as they do above ! Could our poor weak vessels bear this ? No. When the Lord passed by, Moses was to lie in the clefts of the rock ; and the Evangelist John fell down before him ; therefore he gives drop by drop,

that we might not have our hearts over-set, but with an appetite long for more of him: But for the full manifestation of him, that is reserved for you in glory, where you will have strength for vision, and where you will have support for fruition; there you will have your fill of him, when he brings you to the throne of his glory.

Fourthly, The Lord Jesus Christ is pleased not to come down with those full streams, and pour in as your souls, may be, would desire, because your souls may have a real impression of his divine grace and love to your souls. When the soul hath longed and waited for manifestations of his favour, what deep impression does it make? *Then O bless the Lord my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name*, Psal. ciii. How was the Psalmist taken with the loving kindness of God? What deep impressions does it make on the heart, when the soul hath been in the miry clay, and there hath been dead and cold, and the Lord hath quickened it?

Fifthly, The Lord Jesus Christ is pleased to give down to your souls not such full flowings as you may desire (but yet you are not barren) that nothing may be lost of his divine grace and love; there is milk for babes. What would you have all strong men? What then should we do with the milk? there is milk for babes, and meat for strong men? The apostle writes to children, to young men, and to fathers; there are children that can scarce go, must be carried in arms, there is the breast for them; and then there is young men, that is the Christ.

tian, that can weather temptation better than some others. Alas ! should we preach to weak believers as we do to strong believers, they would be discouraged, and think they had no grace : There are some that are able to weather temptation, and to conquer corruption, and to overcome the enemies of their souls and bear the hidings of God's face better than others ; but then there are old men, fathers in Christ, and they have more experience in trials, more experience in comforts : David had experience, " Hide not thy face from me, thou hast been my help hitherto, leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation." Consider there are three sorts : if every one should be a father, every one young men and strong, then there would be no children : You that cry you are barren, have you no grace, because not so much as others, and as you desire ? And tho' you have not such divine manifestations as others, therefore is not Christ yours ? Have you not your longing desires many times filled up abundantly ? There are small vessels and larger vessels, the Lord Jesus would have nothing lost of his divine grace and love ; and believers that serve him faithfully and sincerely, yet have not such manifestations, such full showers as you desire : Would you have all love, all assurance, all comfort ? and so pass along : but are not you conscious that many of the children of God are not so ? But they are longing, depending on Christ for manifestations, and would you not have some drops of comfort

for them? Yes, saith the believer, then that would go beside you at that time; for while you have assurance, you need not those comforts and supports as poor doubting souls want; but you are rather for praising and blessing God: but yet we are in divers frames, and the soul is still thirsting or wanting, and sees its want of grace; that frame of grace seldom meets with disappointment in the word, but something falls to their share. If you had your hearts full of joy, and had full assurance, you would rather be seeking a place to be praising God, than to be under such ordinances, where we are dispensing and giving comfort to doubting souls. As a child at the table, give it a bit and a bit, and the child will be looking up in your face; but if its belly were filled at once, it would be ready to be gone; so if you were filled with comfort and joy, and so were not living upon the Lord Jesus Christ for the manifestations of his grace, you might not have one sentence in some sermons belonging to you. But the longing soul is still longing and waiting, because they are sensible they want more grace, more of Christ, more of the pouring out of the Spirit. When we have a plenty of rain we have not so many vessels empty; but when the hills are dry, and the vallies want rain, then the vessels are set forth, if but a little rain falls: so when you have those full streams of mercy you desire, there will not be such running to set out your vessels; as when you feel your wants, and are more sensible of your emptiness.

O with what earnestness do you thirst after Christ, and the means of grace, when you are under the sense of your own poverty! Then the poor believer cries, O let my vessel have some fillings! O that my heart may not miss any of that comfort, that joy that drops in the word!

Sixthly, The Lord is pleased to give us by drops, and not in such full measure as is desired, that they may be the more endeared to Jesus Christ; it is the whole work of a believer, though he use means, yet to live on Christ; Adam's nature is too much in us, we think we have stock enough, like the prodigal, "Give me my portion and I will be gone;" so we think we have enough of our own: and if we have enlarged hearts, enlarged desires, we are apt to rest on ordinances more than Christ: but when the soul sees nothing, neither ordinances nor duties can help it, then it rests on Christ, then it lives above all upon Christ; though they use all means they can to enjoy Christ, they would leave no stone unturned (as the spouse) that they may meet with Christ, Cant. iii. 2. *I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways will I seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him but I found him not.* The spouse used all means, secret duty, public duty, all ways to meet with Christ, but she could not prevail till Christ revealed himself to her.

Seventhly, The Lord is pleased thus to give to us, that we may be more thankful for every shower of grace.

So much for the second particular; the soul must needs live a growing life that lives on Christ, because Christ comes down as rain on the soul; and although the soul does not find those manifestations that it desires, yet the Lord intends nothing but good towards them.

Thirdly, They that live this life of faith, that desire Christ in all, and live on him in all, Jesus Christ will through his grace, make them live a fruitful life, because Christ is to them the glorious sun of righteousness: as he is rain from heaven, so he is the sun of righteousness, that the believer lives under the warming divine beams of this glorious sun. *For me to live is Christ*; to live under his divine beams of grace, to have my eye fixed on this glorious sun of righteousness, to have my aims and ends, and my eye singly fixed upon him; therefore the believer that by faith lives on him must needs live a fruitful life, Mal. iv. 2. *But unto you that fear my name shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing under his wings; and you shall go forth and grow up as the calves of the stall, unto you that fear my name.*

First,—You have the persons that enjoy this great privilege, those that fear the Lord, to wit, believers, distinguished from all others.

Secondly, The author of this glory, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, The mercy they shall receive from him.

He shall arise with healing under his wings up-

on such as fear his name. This general mercy hath three glorious manifestations :

First, He rises with healing under his wings: Christ makes healthful souls, the believer hath an healthful soul.

Secondly, Here is liberty to the soul, they shall go forth; one that knows not Christ is in bondage ; but *they shall go forth.*

Thirdly, Here is their growth, they shall grow up as calves of the stall; them that fear the Lord the Son of righteousness shall rise with healing under his wings. Though the believer sometimes may have its doubting fits, his dispondency many times, yet the Son of righteousness will not let him perish for want of healing ; *he will rise with healing under his wings.*

First, The Lord Jesus Christ heals the souls of believers with his Spirit, when he pours out his Spirit into their souls ; comfort ye, comfort ye my people, I will send the comforter to you. To a poor doubting, drooping, desponding believer, the Lord Jesus Christ rises with healing under his wings, he sends him a divine cordial from heaven, he sends a drop from his own heart ; the Spirit of God comes and heals the soul. When the disciples were under trouble, the Holy Ghost is promised, *I will send you the Comforter :* Though it is a dark day, though you think you shall never bear your burden, yet I will send the Holy Ghost that shall be a comforter, that shall lead you in all truth, that shall be better than my presence : so when the poor spouse, her very bowels were turned within, her

very heart was broken : "I opened to my beloved and he was gone ;" my soul fainted, my heart melted : what then ? Did he leave any thing behind him ? Yes : he left myrrh upon the handle of the lock ; he did not only leave a lock and key, he did not leave an heart without faith, nor an heart without some peace, nor an heart without joy, nor an heart without comfort. A soul that is under the law, when he hath done a duty, is dead and hard still ; but the Lord Jesus Christ leaves myrrh upon the handle of the lock ; though he was gone and left her wounded, he left her balsam to heal her. Whenever the Lord Jesus Christ leaves his people, he leaves myrrh behind him. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.* Cant. v. 4.

First, Christ heals with his Spirit.

Secondly, Christ heals with his merits.

When a believer is under trouble and fear, this precious blood of Christ comes fresh to them, and is applied to them ; "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb." When a poor soul goes mourning, wishing, longing, O that I knew that Christ were mine ! Then Christ comes with his glorious merit, with his precious blood he comes and heals the soul, comes and applies that blood, *in whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sin,* Ephes. i. 7.

Thirdly, The Lord Jesus Christ heals the soul with his righteousness.

M

When a soul finds itself in a naked condition, (as it were) it cannot draw nigh to God, it cannot look up to God, it cannot speak cheerfully of God, nor thank God for the riches of redemption, fearing Christ is none of theirs; then the Lord Jesus Christ reveals his grace and redemption; and then the soul saith, "The Lord my righteousness;" the Lord Jesus Christ heals all the faculties of the soul.

First, He heals the understanding: though the believer hath true knowledge of Christ, yet he may be in the dark; when he stands behind the wall, the believer cannot see him. The Lord Jesus Christ is pleased by his holy Spirit to enlighten the understanding, to see how glorious and beautiful this Son of righteousness is: the sun is the glory of the world, so Christ is the glory of the soul. As the sun is *Speculum Mundi*, so Christ is *Speculum Animæ*; all the spiritual light that the soul enjoys comes in and through Christ. Psal. xxxvi. 9. *For with thee is the fountain of light*, in thy light we shall see light; so that I say this glorious Sun of righteousness heals the understanding; he opens the blind eyes, and leads the blind in a way they knew not. The glorious gospel is the chariot that the Sun of righteousness rides in, that brings immortal life to light through the gospel: but what would the gospel be without the Sun of righteousness, 2 Tim. i. 10. *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light by the gospel.*

What would a gospel be without a Christ? It would be as a box without a pearl; it would be as a glass without quick-silver. Nay, a poor soul would have no eyes to see this glass, were it not that Christ shines into the soul: before Christ comes every soul is shut up as in a dark dungeon, and can see nothing: but when this glorious Sun doth shine with his glorious beams on the soul, how does the soul see his beauty and excellency! Then it may be said that the light of the Lord is risen upon them, Isa. lx. 1. *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is revealed.* When a poor doubting believer hath the revelation of this Sun of righteousness, when he shines on the soul with the divine beams of his grace, with the divine beams of his love, with the divine beams of comfort, with divine beams of peace, this Sun of righteousness is united unto a believer: we cannot have a dark world while he have the sun; our horizon cannot be dark while we have the glorious sun in it: so Christ is in the believer the hope of glory, and they live in Christ, and Christ lives in them: but does he always shine alike in them? No: the Sun doth not always shine alike; though it is the same one day as another, yet sometimes the clouds keep it from us, but yet they are enlightened with it. Take notice of this, you can never be thriving souls, while you are ignorant souls: but a believer, though he complains of ignorance, hath such knowledge, that he can say, I desire none but Christ, none in comparison of Christ: the soul

can say, I desire nothing but Christ ; and if you ask me, what I would have, I would tell you Christ above all. If you ask me, how came you to know this glorious Lord ? He shined on my understanding in the glorious glass of the gospel, changing my soul into the same image, 2 Cor. iii. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.* When a soul comes to see in the glass of the gospel this glorious Lord, how glorious Christ is, then the soul cries out, O let me live in Christ ! Let me glorify Christ ! Surely now you are thriving souls in the knowledge of Jesus Christ ; I mean, saving knowledge, sanctified knowledge, such as the Sun of righteousness reveals when he rises with healing under his wings. There are some places that have not the Sun for many months, and O how dark and uncomfortable are they then ? How dark are souls till Christ comes into them ? Whatever knowledge you have, tho' you could discourse whole bodies of divinity, yet you are dark and ignorant till Christ comes to enlighten and teach you, the weakest believer is brought to this frame to thirst after Jesus Christ, and to desire him with his whole soul ; most do not believe the report ministers give of him, Isa. liii. 1. *Who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed ? for he shall grow up as a tender plant, and as a root out of the dry ground, he hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him ; ma-*

ny see something in good duties ; they would be doing something for their salvation, and think to patch up a righteousness thereby ; but for to know Jesus Christ so as to live on him, they see no desirableness in him. How much did the Pharisees do ; Yet Jesus Christ was rejected by them. We shall see his glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth. O what a Christ full of grace, and full of truth, and full of love, and full of glory, did these Jews reject ? The Sun of righteousness, though he was come, he had not risen with his glory upon them. Ah glorious Lord, that any should be so blind, as not to see some beauty in this glorious Christ ! And yet so blind is the most of the world, and many professors, that though they have the glorious light of his word, yet how dark are their souls ? We may say as the prophet, *When they see him there is no beauty that they see in him that they should desire him.* Tell a carnal heart of Christ, and grace, and heaven, they go away, and have no desire to him ; but when Christ comes in his word, and shines into the soul, and rises with healing under his wings ; O then, saith the soul, let me have a Christ, let me live to Christ ! Before they saw no beauty in him that they should desire him ; no beauty, and yet altogether beautiful. What is the most glorious object when a man is blind ? What is the glorious sun to a man that cannot see ? So what is the glorious Christ, this lovely Christ, this

precious Christ, to a poor blind finner; but for the believer that hath Christ his life, he cries out for more knowledge, more grace, more communication from Christ; Christ doth daily shine more and more in a believer's understanding, removing ignorance and darkness. The poorest believer in knowledge cannot but give God praise for healing his understanding; though I know we are rather crying out for what we want, than giving thanks for what we have received. The Lord Jesus heals the gross ignorance of your understanding, and heals it more and more: Though God is pleased to give to every one according to their place and station, yet every one shall have a saving knowledge. There is milk for babes, and meat for strong men.

Secondly, You shall prosper and thrive, because the Sun of righteousness, when he arises on your souls, heals your affections. Before the heart was as dead and as cold as a stone, no love for Christ; whatever you loved, no love for this Lord of glory: But now when this Sun of righteousness is risen with healing under his wings, he heals the affections of the soul; that now the soul is let out in affection to Jesus Christ; now the soul cries out, *How lovely is thy dwelling place,* as David did; and why is it so lovely, David? Because there I enjoy God. So saith a believer, how lovely are the ordinances of Christ! Why christians, what makes them so lovely? Oh, saith the christian, I meet with a lovely Christ there. Saith the spouse, *Tell*

thou me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon!

Why, would you be there? I would be where the flock is, because Christ is there, Cant. i. 7.

When the soul feels the warm divine beams of the Sun of righteousness, then the soul comes to see a loveliness in Christ. Before you can love

Christ, you must see that Christ loved you first, he first darts his divine love into your souls.

When Elijah cast his mantle over Elisha, saith

Elisha, *Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and mother, and then I will follow thee.* Why, what

have I done to thee? What hast thou done!

Enough to draw me after thee. It was not a-

ny virtue in the mantle, but a divine power

from heaven that did draw his heart after the

prophet. Away he runs after him, and when

he was taken from him, he cries out, *My fa-*

ther, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the

horsemen thereof.

When the divine beams of the love of Christ are cast into the soul, then the soul cries out, *for me to live is Christ.* O that I may live to the

Lord! O that I may die in the Lord! O that

I may have upholdings, that I may have strength

in every trial! Then I care not what I go

through, that I may enjoy the Lord. Some-

times a believer comes with an heart very cold,

dead and narrow, and doth not Jesus Christ

send him away as a burning lamp? When he

rises with healing under his wings, what divine

love does he draw forth in your souls after him?

The spouse was so cold, she could not so much

as open to Christ? but when Christ had left his myrrh upon the handle of the lock, she runs after him, crying out, *She was sick of love.* So sometimes a believer is in a very dead frame, a very cold frame, a very narrow frame; but the Lord Christ comes in the ordinance with his divine beams, and the soul is warmed, and transformed into the very image of the God of love: As for example, the disciples were walking in a freezing condition, Christ was among them but a little while, and their hearts were burning hot within them: Was it Christ's bodily presence only? No, no, that many thousands enjoyed; but he came to them with the healing beams of his divine love to their souls; he darted divine beams of his grace into their hearts: O then they talk after another manner. With what fervency and delight did they discourse of the kingdom of heaven, to what they did before? Sometimes when believers meet together, how dead, and cold, and narrow are they? But when Christ arises with new healing beams of divine grace in their hearts, how thriving is their discourse? How profitable? How warmly do they discourse of the knowledge of God? How longing after it? Luke xxiv. 32. "And they said one to another, "Did not our hearts burn within us, while he "talked to us by the way, and while he opened to us the scripture?" He might have talked of the scripture long enough, and opened the meaning of them, and no warmth come to their heart, till he had shined into their souls.

You that are united to this Sun of righteousness you that live on him by faith, you are under these thriving beams, though you have not always the same manifestation : But when these glorious beams dart into your souls, how lively are you in your walking, and in your talking ? Though you may have some frosty nights, some cold fits, yet while you are united to this Sun of righteousness, you shall have some warm beams that shall make you thrive and grow. All means of grace are like the prophet's staff, which will not bring the dead child to life until the prophet comes. When the prophet came and lay on the child, the child was warm, and it breathed and stirred, and rose up and walked. Poor doubting soul, is there breath in thee ? Dost thou breathe after Christ ? Dost thou desire no means, mercies nor blessings but what thou mayest enjoy Christ in them ? I say, Christ hath already breathed on you, and his divine beams of grace will cause you to rise up and walk, I mean to grow stronger and stronger ; so that the Sun of righteousness heals the affections of many. A poor soul cries, I cannot love Christ, it is impossible I should ever love him ! but if you desire to love Christ with your whole heart you love him already. The soul that hath a spark of faith, that works by love, shall be sure to increase his love : When Christ comes down, when he puts in his finger by the hole of the door, saith the soul, *Draw me, I will run after thee* ; his love is better than wine. Christ sometimes gives you drops of wine,

sometimes flagons of wine ; sometimes a sip, and sometimes full draughts. *Draw me, and I will run after thee* ; as if he had said, draw me, and I will commend thee to others : As Melancthon said when he was converted, he thought, that he could have converted all that he conversed with ; but he found the old serpent was too hard for young Melancthon. When the soul comes to know this glorious Christ by faith, and to live upon him, the soul thinks he could so commend him, that he could make all about him to love Christ. “ Draw me, I will “ run after thee : ” Why, what is the matter ? “ Thy love is better than wine,” verse 3. “ Be- “ cause of the savour of thy good ointments, “ thy name is as ointments poured forth, there- “ fore do the virgins love thee,” verse 4. “ Draw “ me, we will run after thee.” When the Lord Jesus Christ witnesseth to the believer, by the Spirit, that he is united to him, when he sends forth divine beams from this glorious light, and life, and warmth, the soul hath his love drawn out abundantly. When Peter was freezing by the fire in the high priest’s hall, one look from Christ melts his heart. Ah, my friends, you may have the fire of ordinances kindled, yet have an heart as cold as a stone ; but when Christ looks on you, then does he melt your souls into the very image of love, then he draws the heart after him in divine acts of love, that when the soul hath often thought of, now it becomes more and more to the soul, that love is stronger than death. When the di-

vine beams of divine love are darted into the soul, and the soul comes to consider,

First, What inconceivable love the love of Christ is; O, faith the soul, Christ hath loved me with an inconceivable, unspeakable love: So Paul faith, who loved me, and gave himself for me, "Not I live, but Christ lives in me;" the soul is acquainted, this is an unspeakable love, John i. 3. "Behold what manner of love is this that we should be called the children of God!" O what unspeakable love is this, faith the soul, that I should be called a child of God! How comes it about? O the wonders of this love? O that I should be called a child of God? What me, to be made like Christ? For God to be my Father in Christ? What manner of love is this? How unspeakable, how wonderful is this love?

Secondly, When Christ comes to shine on the soul, it comes to see what distinguishing love this is: why me, O Lord? Who gave himself for me? faith the apostle, there is an application of this love. Why me, Lord? Why not many thousands chosen, and I left out? Why I chosen, and many thousands left? O that Christ should love me, redeem me, die for me! O my soul, love thou the Lord, live to this Lord, let him be all in all, who loved me before the world was: that I am not among the damned in hell is a wonderful mercy: but that I should be one of the Lord's redeemed ones, that I should be chosen out of the kindred, and tongues, and nations of the earth: O what love

is this! The expressions and impressions of divine love! A believer would live with it all his days, and die with it, and go to glory with it. Why me, Lord? Why hast thou pardoned me, sanctified me? O that God should give Christ for me! That Christ should go through his sorrows for me! through his bloody sweat for me! That I should have a part in Christ's precious merits! What tho' Christ loved sinners, if I am not the sinner that Christ loves? But when the beams of divine love are darted into the soul, it cries, O that Christ hath loved me more than his own life! more than his own glory! and loved me above others in the world! O what distinguishing love is this! Then the soul must needs have an endeared love to Christ. O that for me to live may be Christ! O that I may enjoy him in all my enjoyments!

Thirdly, The soul sees the love of Christ is undeserved love. O wretch that I am, that ever Christ should love me! It is an heightening our love when the divine beams of his love shines on our souls, to reveal how unworthy we are of Christ's love. This is that the apostle speaks of, and nothing more heightens our love, than that Christ loved us, when we are unworthy of his love, 1 Tim. i. 12, 13. "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy." It is a glorious beam of divinity shines on the soul, when the soul comes to

see its own unworthiness: why me, Lord, so wretched and miserable a sinner? What, Christ come from his glorious throne, from heaven to earth, to heal my heart! To come here to die for me a wretched soul! O when the Sun of Righteousness rises on the soul to draw out its love to Christ, then the soul sees its own unworthiness: then a soul loves Christ really, when he sees Christ loved unworthy him. How unworthy is my soul of his love! This was Paul's cry, and so it is every believer's; and the more Christ shines on your soul, the more do you see your unworthiness of his love and grace; and the soul cries out, Lord, hast thou passed by all my unworthiness; crowned me with love, enriched me with love, and shall I have my fill of love? O what love is this!

Fourthly, The soul finds it a love that passeth, Eph. iii. 14. *And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.* Truly, saith the soul, I cannot tell you wherefore Christ loved me, nor I cannot tell you the depths of his love; but this I can tell, I shall ever shine in the ocean of his love to all eternity. The more they meditate, the more they consider; the more they think of it, the more they wonder; what was from eternity in the breast of God, that was manifested in time in giving Christ. If you ask me to tell you from whence it comes, it was from eternity.

Secondly, The Sun of righteousness with his glorious beams heals the affections, in giving the

soul an humble and contrite heart. Many think when they are not shooting up, they are not growing; but there may be a taking root, though not a shooting up; the golden mines are not seen above the earth, they lie low: by the influence of the sun the seed takes root in the earth, and springs up. Thus it is with the Sun of righteousness, the Lord Jesus Christ, in changing the heart of a believer; when he is increasing in the inner man, not shooting forth, not growing in appearance, yet he takes root, is growing in humility. When once the Lord Jesus Christ comes with his grace, and shines into the soul, it humbles the soul, and makes it low in its own eyes, and then the soul sees itself wanting in grace, wanting in love, wanting in enlargements and delights, but it grows humble. When Christ appears the soul sees its own deformity, the soul thinks it is decaying in grace, when it is not acting those graces, as we may say, above ground. The fruit-trees do not bear fruit all the year, yet are alive all the year. So I say to the believer, it is the surest way of growth when they grow in humility. When a soul comes to see Christ, the more he shines with the divine lustre of his grace and righteousness, the more the soul is contrite. Saith, Paul, *when the law came, sin revived and I died.* Paul, was it the law in the letter that shewed you your sin? (then why does it not teach those poor creatures that read it, and have it read to them?) No, but it was the power of Christ in the law, the spirit of the law of life

in Christ that shined into his heart, and brought home the law to him, to be a condemning Judge on the bench, to give the sentence of death, that Christ might be there to be the object of life and salvation to his soul. Saith he, "sin revived and I died." Persons will strain what they can to keep an even reckoning with the law, by doing some outward duties. Such as the Lord Jesus hath not risen upon, they are yet in darkness, children of the night; they walk at uncertainty, they know not whether they go. Alas! many a poor soul thinketh he is as sure to go to heaven as he is to die, when he is in the very road to hell; only some go in the broad trodden path, open, profane, impudent sinners; some steal thither behind the hedge, they are going to hell, but in a closer walk, hidden from others, and from many that are said to be the children of the kingdom, that are strangers in heart to an inward revelation of Jesus Christ. But when Christ comes to the soul, he comes to the inward part; then the soul is unhorsted of itself, and laid low before the Lord. It was the saying of an holy divine, we may sooner call twenty from profaneness, than one from his own righteousness: for faith he, sin is a feverish distemper to the soul; and when the man hath sinned, he knows he is out of order: But for a man's own righteousness, it is so born and bred with him, that he makes it his grand idol; till Christ appears to the soul with divine beams of his righteousness and

*Mr. Murcott on
Mal. iv. 2*

grace ; this lays a soul low and humble before the Lord, and makes a poor soul behold its own ignorance. Saith the soul, I am foolish, but Christ is my wisdom ; I cannot manage my salvation, nor I cannot choose aright, but Christ is my wisdom to choose for me.

Thus a soul is humbled under its own ignorance : he beholds Christ that glorious sun that gives light to see his Father's face, and to have all the glorious will of God revealed to the soul in him. The sun is the glory of the heavens, but one star differs from another star in glory, but there is none like the glory of the sun. O the Lord hath put the excellence of glory on the Lord Jesus ! He is the shining forth of his Father's glory. He speaks here of Christ as incarnate : As the glory of God did shine in the face of Moses, so that the people could not behold ; so now the glory of the Lord shineth in the face of Jesus Christ, as the apostle hath it, so that we cannot behold it ; it dazzles our eyes steadfastly to behold his glory, as it doth to behold the sun in its glory. Here is the glory of his grace, the glory of his wisdom, of his mercy, of his power, and all in Christ ; he is the glory, as it were, of divine attributes, they all shine forth in him, each with his peculiar glory. The temple, the glory of the Lord filled it, so that they could not stand to minister before him sometimes. So brethren, now the Lord hath placed us in Jesus Christ, he hath filled him with his glory. Therefore saith the prophet, *The glory of the Lord is risen on thee,*

Isa. lx. 3. that is, Christ manifested Mr. Murcot.
to thee.

Secondly, The soul sees itself unrighteous, therefore it is humbled under its sinfulness, till Christ is made its righteousness.

Thirdly, The soul sees itself cloathed with rags ; like a man that works hard, yet cannot clothe himself with any thing but rags. Saith a soul, notwithstanding all that I have done, I have not a righteousness to clothe me to stand with before God : But Christ is my robe of righteousness : therefore when the soul is humbled, when he does not grow in enlargements, yet he grows humble under the sense of his own unworthiness, and of Christ's excellency. Many trees are planted in shady places, that grow up tall, though they bear no fruit. When a soul knows not Christ, there may be some external duties performed, yet the soul does not grow. When trees are short they bear thick. When a soul grows in humility, they bring forth much fruit, though they hang down their heads. When the bunches of grapes are heavy, then does the vine hang down its head : So when a soul grows out of love with itself, and in love with Christ, then does the soul lie low before the Lord. When a believer thinks there is a decaying, it is not so ; though it may be some graces are not so much in exercise at one time as at another. But I do not understand how grace can decay whilst Christ lives. The trees are not green all the year, yet you

do not say they are dead, the root is in the earth and keeps alive. So a believer groaning under a sense of his unworthiness, he is then best prepared to bring forth fruit to God. The more we find our own unworthiness, and the less we find the promises to belong unto us, the more we must desire them, being assured that this desire doth greatly please God, who desireth and willeth his grace should be earnestly desired. Therefore when the glorious Sun of righteousness casts forth its divine beams, the soul grows humble and lowly : There may be some deadness as to the exercise of faith, some deadness as to the exercise of love, some backwardness in heart unto duty. Is the soul now decaying ? No, it is a winter season ; and tho' you do not find grace in present exercise, yet your root is alive and will spring forth. Will Christ let it die ? No, it is more to glorify his grace. Lazarus shall lie four days in the grave, and then the power of God will be more glorified in raising him up ; and this we find most excellent in Peter : Did not Peter know Christ ? Yes ; but yet he must take a little better root ; he must see that not only his righteousness is in Christ, but his life also. Peter was a brave man before he fell, *I will not forsake thee, though all men do, I will stand by thee ; if all men forsake thee, I will stand alone.* Many times when we are carried on smoothly and largely in duty, we are apt to think our mountain shall never be moved, as David did ; but, saith he, *Thou hidst thy face, and I was troubled.* When

the sun is lowest and farthest from us, then our shadows are longest ; but when it is shining over our heads, and nearest us, then our shadows are shortest ; then the sun is to us most glorious : So it is, the less our knowledge of Christ is, the more do men doat on their own righteousness : The shadow of their own righteousness is longest when Christ and they are most strangers ; but when Christ comes to dart into them his glorious beams, then they see themselves nothing. The soul that hath a glorious revelation of Jesus Christ comes to see himself all in Christ, and nothing in himself. Saith the apostle, *Sin died and I revived*. Christ is truly omnipotent, and truly then reigns in our souls, when we find ourselves so weak that we can scarce give a groan. Many, because they have not outward marks or signs in acting of sanctification, they will conclude they are not alive in Christ ; but faith, when Christ arises with glory on the soul, beholds Christ what he is, in the promises, and what he hath done for poor sinners, and so wraps itself in Christ alone, in whom all the promises are yea and amen for ever. Christ is that glorious Sun from whence a believer hath all his light, and that precious stock that a believer receives sap and nourishment from, to bring forth fruit. A believer may have a winter's season, that he may not exercise his grace ; but I cannot understand that a believer can be said to decay in grace, being ingrafted in Christ.

Do you think Peter is in a worse condition than before, or that he decays? No, it is only grace stopt in its exercise. Do you think faith was in a decaying frame? (I know many conclude it was, but I cannot think it) faith was only stopt in its exercise; his faith was in the hands of Christ safe. Sin is sin, and will cost the saint dear; but though sin is evil in itself, God brings it about for good; and though there is a stop in the exercise of grace, the root shall not wither, nor the branch neither, but the Sun of righteousness will shine on the soul and revive it. What does poor Peter do? O how does he break forth into sorrow? Luke xxii. 61. *The Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice; and Peter went out and wept bitterly.* Was Peter in a decaying frame? The exercise of his faith was stopt for a time; the current of that faith that works by love, that should have been stronger than death, that many waters cannot quench; that love that should have been in a flame, it was for a while under the ashes, and floods did as it were overflow it. But did Peter decay? No, Peter's root was in the ground; there came a glorious beam from the Lord Jesus that did revive Peter. Peter, the devil will sift thee, and thy comforts will have a failing time; thy own experience will fail thee of thy love to Christ, and confidence of thy courage and boldness. There is no building on experiences, we may take them for comfort,

but it is faith in Christ we must build on, because experiences may fail us. Peter comes to a sad experience of his own wretched heart, his love was as it were under water; but, faith Christ, *Peter I have prayed that thy faith be not lost*; thy experience will fail for a time; When a tree does not bear fruit in the summer, we say it fails; but in the winter you cannot say it fails, because you cannot expect fruit: So Christ told Peter, his faith should not fail; therefore it did not decay, but there was a stop in its exercise; but his faith being kept by Christ, prayed for by Christ, it did not fail. Indeed poor Judas's decayed, Demas and Alexander's decayed, because theirs was but seeming, not real grace. But is Peter's decayed? No: He like the flowers in spring time, appeared. Christ looked upon Peter: The Sun of righteousness, this glorious Lord, the believer's life, when he sees the believer wants a season to bring forth fruit, then he turns about the divine beams of his grace towards the soul; Peter had taken root, and now he shall bring forth fruit. Peter remembered the words of Jesus, he remembered what Christ had said, *Lord, thou hast told me what a deceitful heart I have*. And what does he boast? No, he falls a weeping, he grows in humility; now he hath a look from Christ. O how many sweet looks go forth in those divine beams on Peter's soul! Christ takes care of his own; we have great complaints from a believer, but Christ always when the soul wants fruit, comes with a divine beam, darting into the soul.

Christ doth cast many sweet looks on a sinner, when he breaks his heart for sin.

First, A look of love. Hast thou dealt so with the Lord that loved thee? Ah Peter! Though thou hast denied me, I will not forsake thee. Oh Peter, though thou hast sworn and cursed, I know not the man, yet I know thee, and will take notice of thee, and will make known myself to thee. O consider what love this was! Christ looked with a first love on Peter; we love him because he first loved us. Ah Peter! Thou hast made the breach, but I will come to make it up; thou hast turned from me, but I will follow thee with my love, I will begin with thee: As Christ began our life of grace, so he begins all our revivings. Take a faint under an hard heart, under guilt, he may sit under means, and it is his duty so to do, but no stirring till Christ comes. When Peter was in his sin and rebellion, Christ looked on him with a first love.

Secondly, Christ looks with a free love. Peter, I will not wait till thou comest to me with legal repentance, I will look on thee before thou confessest me. Christ begins first, he comes freely with his love; Peter had sinote on his heart, he had no preparation to come to Christ! Christ loves freely, Hosea xiv. when he heals backsliders he loves freely, ver. 4. *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for my anger is turned away from them.* Every act of Christ's love to us is free love; there is not any moment of

our time that we can bring any thing that is our own to Christ to love us.

Thirdly, Christ's love was a very strong love, sinners shall never break the cords of it. *Therefore have I drawn them with the cords of a man, with the bands of love*, Hos. xi. 4. O how strong was Christ's love to Peter! When a soul laments that it cannot love Christ, then the soul is growing in the grace of love, love then is stronger than death, and so is Christ's love to every one that he redeems, and so it was to Peter: The strong love of Christ broke in upon him, and now he falls a weeping. Ah, Peter! Have I loved thee, and yet thou hast forsaken me; yet here I am with a new look of love, love stronger than death, that overcomes all our deadness and coldness; then the heart breaks and melts; when Christ comes with his look of grace, he will break the hardest heart there.

Fourthly, Christ's love was a very seasonable love; "Then was the time of love, when thou wert weltering in thy blood," Ezek. xvi. How seasonably does the sun shine on the flowers and plants to revive and comfort them! When the soul complains, corruption is strong, grace is weak; my heart is cold, love dies, I find my soul fainting, I fear I decay; Christ comes in seasonably with a new manifestation of his love to the soul, and this breaks the very heart. That which is spoke of the sun in the firmament, may be spoken of this glorious Sun of righteousness the sun comes like a bridegroom out of his chamber, so does the Lord

Jesus Christ appear to his bride: the sun rejoiceth to run its race as a strong man, and as a bridegroom out of his chamber does it appear: So does Christ come as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and as a strong man delights to run his race: so does the Lord Jesus Christ break forth into the soul with his glorious beams of divine grace.

Fifthly, Christ's love is a great love. How great is that love that can pardon such sins, pardon such sinners, visit the saints under such frames of heart! This was the love of Christ to Peter, he looked on Peter (to break his heart) with a look of love.

Secondly, He looked with a look of mercy. O Peter, I will pardon thee. *Return unto me, saith the Lord, I am married unto thee* Jer. iii. Ah Peter! I am thine; he looked upon Peter, it was mercy broke Peter's heart. The terrors of the law may make men run distracted, but their hearts are hardened against God. But when pardoning grace comes, that breaks the heart, melts the heart. "Peter went out and wept bitterly;" what, shall I find mercy? Shall I find favour? Shall such rich mercy be shewed in pardoning me! *O give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever*, Psal. cvii. and Psal. cxxxvi.

Thirdly, The Lord Jesus Christ breaks in with a divine shine of sanctification. If Christ is your life, you shall never want grace; it is our duty to be waiting for grace, praying for grace, but a believer shall never want grace;

he gives grace to him in a time of need ; if ever it was a time of need, this was a time of need with Peter. It is good you should see your want, it is good you should seek the Lord ; he gives the grace of repentance, the grace of humility ; he gives the grace of Godly sorrow. How seasonably is grace given to a soul that longs for it ! When there is no water in their own cisterns, the Lord Jesus comes with new springs of grace to such a soul. A believer never walks more comfortably than when he walks humbly, then the soul mourns before the Lord. Such divine beams of love from Christ works in the soul true contrition and humiliation. Ah, saith the soul, have I had so many wooings, so many offers of grace, yet have kept grace out of my heart ? Could I shut out the remembrance of him one moment ? Hath his love been so soon forgotten ? He that wept for me, and bled for me, and died for me, have I kept him out of my heart ? The spouse tasted of this, but it was a growing time, but her soul was in great bitterness ; Oh, saith she, *it was the voice of my beloved, I knew him, yet I did not open to him,* Cant. v. 2. *I sleep but my heart waketh, saying, open to me my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* ver. 3. *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on ? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them ?* ver. 4. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.* When I opened

my bowels, my bowels were moved to think that I knew it was my beloved, yet would not open to him. When a soul comes to know Christ, it cries, O the many sweet wooings I have had! O that ever I should flight, neglect, and resist as I have done! O that I should love so little, when he loves so much! O how flight have I thought of him! How unkindly have I carried it, and how untenderly! O now let Christ be all in all! Now the soul hath a weeping eye; I looking cannot but love, and loving cannot but mourn. O now I wonder how I could shut him out of my admiration, of my adoration, out of my praises and delights one moment!

Thus the loving-kindness of Christ melts the heart, when Christ is made our life, and Christ sends forth new glorious beams of his grace into the soul: the saint would not walk with a flighting thought of Christ, but would be always admiring and glorifying divine love. When a soul comes to have a look from Christ, then there is the weeping eye. What dost thou weep for, soul? O, I weep for joy, yet mourn for sorrow. O that I should be so unkind, so ungrateful, as to flight and disregard him! O that ever Christ should knock and knock again, love and love again! O Christ is my life: Had he not been my life, I had been dead and undone unto all eternity. The soul that before thought itself something, now sends forth sad complaints, complaints of an unbelieving heart, that Christ hath been entertained no more, believed no

more, relied on no more; now the soul complains and cries out, *O wretched creature that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this sin and death?*

This is not a pining unbelief; but faith being raised up in an higher pitch, the soul grows in humility, that it hath been so misbelieving. If ever a soul comes to have the blessed revelation of the excellency of Christ, the thing which they lay to heart, is unbelief: Many think if they can but keep touch with duty, it is well enough: but when Christ comes, the soul mourns that it has not believed; the soul comes to see how worthless itself is, and how precious Christ is. O, saith the soul, methinks all of Christ is precious! His offers are precious, his promises are precious, his precepts are precious. O how unworthy am I of such grace!

Thirdly, When this glorious Sun of Righteousness shines into the heart of a poor sinner, the will is subdued, "They shall be a willing people in the day of my power:" Man hath a will to set up something of his own, but now the will is conquered. When the soul is brought

Mr. Perkins in His Grain
of Mustard-seed.

to this, to have a constant and earnest desire to be reconciled to God; to believe and to repent, if it be in a touched heart, is in acceptation with God, as reconciliation, faith and repentance itself. Saith the soul, let me have nothing but Christ, whatever I have without Christ it will do me no good; let me live to Christ, let me glorify Christ; blessed and glori-

ous is such a life; I would be swallowed up in that life, and so then the will is brought down. Lord, let me be any thing, so that I may glorify Christ; then the soul will trifle no longer. Saith the soul, I am resolved to have a Christ; he is offered, why may I not have him? God hath given him freely. Why not to me that am a sinner? The poor soul presently lays hold on him, presently stretches out his hand of faith to lay hold on him.

Thus the soul is growing, though not with those affections as it would; yet the affections are healed in growing in contrition, by the Sun of Righteousness shining on it.

Secondly, A soul is healed of the wounds and guilt that is on him. When a sinner comes to have the Sun of Righteousness shine on his soul, his guilt is healed, Isa. liii. The prophet saith, *By his stripe we are healed*: The stripes of Christ are our healing. Verse 4, and 5. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded, for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* There is no thriving in grace till the wounds of the soul are healed; all our wounds are inward wounds; it is not an outward prayer will heal your wounds, nor outward fasting, nor outward confession; no, it must be the streams of the blood of Christ running through the veins of the heart by faith. The soul never comes to have his wounds heal-

ed, till Christ rises with healing under his wings : There is an inward wound within the soul, there is guilt within that will sit as a judge condemning the soul. Now by his stripes we are healed, there must be an union with Christ, the sufferings of Christ to be made over to the soul ; Christ's righteousness to be made as surely the soul's own, as if it had a perfect righteousness of its own : *Take away all iniquity*, saith the prophet, "so will we render the calves of our lips ;" take away all iniquity, while there is any guilt on you, you are altogether guilty, Psal. cxliii. 2. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man be justified." If you are called to answer for one transgression, you are undone : if you are called to account for one, you lie under the condemnation of all ; but when Christ is become your life, then all your guilt is removed ; no justification but by Christ alone. The diseases and distempers of our souls are our sins, the guilt of sin is a wound that is cut deep in the soul : Now when a soul is brought under the healing wings of the Sun of righteousness, he heals this wound, Psalm ciii. 3. *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases* : Sin cuts off a creature from God, and so maketh a wound, which now is healed and made up : When they are pardoned, forgiveness and healing is all one with them in the prophet, Hosea xiv. 4. *I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely ;* the justification freely by his grace, as the a-

posse calls it. Poor sinner, thou that ever knewest what sin was, what a wound it was to thy soul, knewest that thy pardon was a healing in thee; so then this arising is, by his Spirit in his word he conveyeth the blood of Jesus Christ, the merit thereof maketh it over to the poor soul that believeth, to the doing away of all the guilt that lay on the soul; also taketh away that anguish and trouble that did lie upon the soul: When a wound is healed, the anguish and smart is taken away, tho' it may be, while searched and tented, there will be smart and fore, yet afterwards it is taken away. Broken bones are nothing to a broken heart, nor the broken flesh any thing to a broken bone, *The Lord heals the broken heart, he bindeth up their wounds*, Psal. cxli. 3. *I have seen his ways, and I will heal him, saith the Lord.* He speaks to the condition of a poor disconsolate soul under the sense of God's wrath, Isa. lvii. 8, 9. *He was wroth and smote him, yea, he did hide, and was wroth.* Oh how this troubles a poor soul! He cannot but have his heart full of darkness, terror and trouble, that hath the face of God hidden from him. Well, saith the Lord, tho' he did walk frowardly before me, gave me not my ends in smiting him, yet I will heal him; and wherein doth this healing consist? Alas! In restoring joy and comfort to him. The poor soul was overwhelmed with sorrow, his heart was ready to fail and sink within him; and least it should do so, he will heal him: Here is a healing indeed, the healing of broken bones

and broken hearts ; the Lord Jesus was anointed by the Father, for this very purpose, with the oil of joy and gladness above his fellows, that he might speak in due season, that he might bind up the broken spirits. The Lord Jesus delighteth to do the will and work of his Father. O he loveth to be doing with broken hearts ! And O that we had work for the Lord Jesus ! This day he is among us now, to see if there be any heart in this condition, that he may heal us, it is his delight to do it. O how doth many a poor soul come under an ordinance with an heartless mind, cold and dead, and his heart doth burn within him, while the Lord by his Spirit hath communion with him in those ordinances. What refreshment doth arise to a poor weary soul, when the Lord that createth the fruits of the lips, speaketh peace to such troubled and weary souls ! He reviveth the spirits which languish, and are ready to go out. As the poor birds in the winter are hard put to it ; some lie, you hardly know where, as if they were dead or dying ; when the sun returneth, how doth it revive their little spirits that were dead before ! The night brings a heaviness and burden along with it to the body, but in the morning when the sun ariseth, how doth it enliven and enlighten ! Oh so it is in this case, many poor souls can say by experience, when darkness hath been long on them, they have no light, no comfort, no refreshment, no breathing of the Spirit to their apprehensions in ordinances on their heart. O how have

their hands hanged down, and their knees feeble, and knock one against another for feebleness! And that which was within them in their own apprehension ready to die! But no sooner hath the Lord Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, looked on them, but they have had their ankle-

bones-stretched, "The joy of the
 Mr. Mercer. Lord is their strength," Neh. viii. 10.

The saint indeed sometimes may have some graces that may not be in exercise; but there are other graces set on work, so that a soul still lives a fruitful life. While you are ignorant of Christ, there is no going forward whatever; whatever duties we do, it is all but an heap of ignorance; legal repentance is such sorrow as is in hell; but they that know Christ, go forth of themselves to Christ for all.

First, The soul goes from his own righteousness, all becomes as filthy rags, he goes forth from himself; you will never thrive while under the old Adam; no believing in Christ, no living on Christ, until the soul goes out of himself; before you can see Christ glorious, you must go out of yourselves, Cant. iii. 11. *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.* It is a glorious crowning when we are crowned with Christ's crown; but a withered crown, when we are crowned with our own doings and duties. The pharisees never thrived under any thing they did, because they did not come forth of

themselves. Go forth from your sins, from yourselves, out of yourselves to Christ for your life. A poor man hath nothing at home, and he goes forth every day for something to live on : So a poor believer cries, Lord, I have nothing in myself, I will live upon Christ for all; it is not enough that I have made a profession, or can hear a sermon, or have got good books ; but, faith the soul that knows Christ, I will live every day on Christ for new experience, for new supplies every day for the manifestation of his grace, of his love, of his peace ! The natural man is bound up in himself, and is fond of his prison. As the prodigal, he was resolved as long as he could get husks, he would live on them, rather than go to his father's house for bread. Many poor creatures, while they can but speak to God in duty, (though they have many fears) they will live on that, rather than go to Christ to be their life. The woman of Canaan was highly to be commended ; for when Christ told her, *she was a dog*, she desired *a crumb* ; why, woman, sure you may fare better than to live on crumbs ? What, have you nothing at home ? No, she must live upon Christ, for she had not a crumb of her own that would feed her soul, Mat. xv. 25, 26, 27. *She came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me : But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the childrens bread and to cast it to dogs : And she said, truth Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. I shall never thrive till I am under Christ's table : A*

crumb from Christ will satisfy me more than all my own loaves : I am sure not a word drops from him, but it is life ; not any look from him, but it is life ; not any communication from him, but it is life. So a soul that lives on Christ, he goes forth of himself. O pray how do you that have been so long without the knowledge of Christ, that live upon your own duties ? A believer will tell you he lives better, and fares better now he is Christ's beggar, and lies under his table for a crumb, than he did when he lived on his own stock. There is liberty in this life, " If the Son make you free, ye are free indeed : " You are but bond-slaves by nature ; a slave to the devil, a slave to the world, a slave to yourselves, in bondage to the law ; and I believe many professors in this day understand not these words, " If the Son make you free, then are you free indeed. " Many will be ready to say, make me free ? I will pray my way to heaven, I will hear my way to heaven : Ay, but do what you will, while you are out of Christ you are in bonds, it is only Christ can make you free, John viii. 36. *If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed. The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever, the servant shall be cast forth.* When you have done all, you shall be shut out of heaven, if you are not a son. The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the son abideth for ever. If you bring the best of your performances at the great day before the Lord, and hope to be accepted for your so doing ; if

you should say, Lord, receive me into thy kingdom of glory, for I have prayed, fasted, and gave in alms, lived inoffensively to all, done hurt to none; as sure as you live now, the next word would be, "I know you not, depart from me:"

We must be sanctified by the righteousness of faith, which is of God in Christ. O what a blessed thing is it to be found in him! That was Paul's care and desire, Phil. iii. 9. "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, and be found in him;" These words have an emphasis in them,

And be found in him. O take heed every one of you that hear me this day, that you be in Christ; "not having mine own righteousness," saith the apostle. What, Paul? none of your sufferings, none of your prayers, none of your duties? No, none of them; these are good in their places, but I would have none of them in point of justification, but be found in Christ; I desire the righteousness which is of God by faith.

I tell you, friends, you can never grow, till you come to live this life, till the Sun of righteousness rises on your souls, and you go forth of yourselves, and live on Christ, and then you grow; why? Because then you are grafted into another stock, John i. 1, 2. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman; every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he

purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." You must be united and grafted into another stock before you can bring forth fruit. It may be some will say, what, have I lived so long, and have not taken one step to heaven? I tell you, until you know Christ, you have not taken one step heaven-wards! Many duties performed, and yet the man be where he was. Can a blind man see his way until his eyes be opened? Can a dead man walk till he is raised from the grave? Can a man serve God, and please God, that is dead in sin, under sin? Dead God-wards, heaven-wards? Dead to the life of grace? Blessed be God for every moral man, and I wish we had more of them in the world. But this is salvation-work we are about, there is nothing below the saving knowledge of Christ will give you entrance into glory. Be under ordinances as long as you will, not one step do you take heaven-ward till Christ comes to be your life, then the soul prospers, then it hath liberty. Take a soul that doth not know this life of Christ, the soul is under burdens: I will appeal to your consciences, until you come to know Christ, was there not a burden on your soul? If you should have prayed all your life, you could not get the burden removed: And can a man thrive under a burden, under weights, under pressures? There is a burden on the conscience; the poor papist, the poor legalist, the poor formalist, when they have done all they can, come to speak with them, the weight is still left behind. What if a man

lives twenty or thirty years in Turkey, he is still in captivity, notwithstanding all his toil and pains, if he be not redeemed by paying a ransom for him. There is great plenty of means among professors, but still there is a complaining, I pray, and I hear, and I have no comfort; but when Christ comes to rise with healing under his wings, when a soul beholds his iniquities laid on Christ, never to be charged on him more, then he serves the Lord chearfully, walks chearfully with God in all the duties of his heavenly calling. While a man bears his own iniquity, he can never walk chearfully, never serve God comfortably. Whatever a person does, while he lives on any thing below Christ, he lives but discontentedly. What gives the soul rest and satisfaction must be as durable as the soul; for if we can possibly find

in this world a condition and state of things most agreeable in all other respects to our desires and wishes, yet

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if the soul be conscious to itself that it shall and must over live, and leave them all behind it, it can never reach true contentment in the greatest affluence and confluence of them. Man being an immortal, is therefore a prospecting creature, and can never be satisfied with this, that it is well with him at present, except he can be satisfied that it shall be so for ever. Do what you will, there is a discontentedness, if you have not Christ to take away the sin of your duties. When the messengers of Job

came one after another, what, will you never have done? He might have said, No, not while all is gone; neither will the law have done cursing you, nor conscience accusing you, while you are under the guilt of sin; there comes one messenger after another bringing the bad news. Whatever you do while you are strangers to Christ, you have nothing but ill news: The justice of God meets you, the law condemns you, the devil takes all advantages against you, because you have not Christ to be your righteousness: But whatever a Christian meets with of crosses, afflictions, reproaches, if he say, comest thou peaceably? The answer will be, I come peaceably. When Christ is become your salvation, and hath taken away your iniquity, there is nothing comes to you but what comes peaceably. Where is Daniel? In the lion's den: What, among those devouring creatures? But there is the angel of the Lord with him to stop their mouths. The three children in the fiery furnace; but there is the Lord Jesus Christ with them. Where is Moses? On Mount Horeb; but there is the angel in the burning bush with him. Where are the children of Israel? In the wilderness, in affliction, but the angel of his presence is with them, Isa. lxiii. 9. *In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.* And where art thou, soul, that Christ is thy life in afflictions? All is for good, all is in love: There is

not one providence comes, but it is for thy good. How can you love God when you live discontentedly? How can you delight in God, while you fear God is angry with you? While you think, though I have been at duty, I have not done enough: Here will be an opposition against duty; a carnal heart cannot hold out long; and what you do will be but with discontent. What profit have we, that we have fasted and prayed, and thou regardest it not? Many persons look after large expressions, and great enlargements; when they miss of them, they are discontented; as Jonah was, because his gourd withered. Here is a discontented professor, as well as an humble christian: The humble christian complains; why? Because he cannot believe more, nor love God more, nor serve God better: But the discontented professor complains for want of gifts and enlargements. "Shall we bring thousands of rams, or ten thousands of rivers of oil, or my first born for my transgression; the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul," Micah vi. 7. What a proud absurd question is this? A carnal heart will do any thing, rather than come to Christ, and yet have no contentment in what they do. But soul, when Christ becomes thy life, and the glorious divine beams of his grace shine on your soul, you will live a contented life; all comes through Christ's hands; all your blessings and mercies are bought with the blood of Christ; all your duties sanctified by Christ: Surely this soul must needs thrive. We say discontentedness

makes an unthriving person. Indeed it is impossible the soul that is not united to Christ should thrive, for he hath altogether impossibilities before him: It is impossible for you to reach heaven with your duties, to get your sins done away with all your tears and prayers, without you are washed in the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin, 1 John i. 7. If you can fulfil the law, you shall live by the works of the law, but it is an impossible thing: If you can pray your way to glory, you shall be saved; but it is impossible: But when a man comes to Christ, he takes away all the impossibilities. To what purpose were a man commanded to bring in a sum of money of his own to save his life, if he never had it, nor ever will have it to pay? Man, since the fall, hath not, nor never can have a power of his own to obey God's commands. Whatever God commands, Christ hath done it for the believer; whatever law commands, or justice demands, it is all done for you by Christ. Saith the apostle, as for the works of the law, if you can do them, you shall live in them, Gal. iii. 5. "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. iii. 22. "But scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Verse 23. "But before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should

afterward be revealed." But, saith he, "We were all concluded under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Christ comes and opens the prison doors, lets the soul out from unbelief, lets the soul out from under the curse of the law. How does Christ let the soul from prison? Christ comes to the heart, causeth it to believe; the soul now believes the promises, takes hold of Christ in the promise; Christ comes to the unbeliever, to the soul under the fear of God's wrath and curse, assisting it with a divine promise, working faith in the heart. As suppose a soul is under the burden of his sins, and should say, I am so great a sinner, I fear I shall never obtain mercy; Christ comes with this promise, *It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.* The believing sinner layeth hold on Christ in the promises, and findeth relief. The soul lies burdened with the sense of God's wrath for sin; Christ comes in with that promise, *Come to me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Saith the soul, is it so indeed? What, rest in Christ for me? What, will Christ give me rest? The soul closes with the promise, makes Christ his life and rest to live upon. As supposing a man should be in a crowd among pikes, guns and halberts, among mischievous men; he is afraid one will wound him, another kill him; but comes a friend

of his, and a strong man, and carries him through all. So does Christ when a poor soul is under fear in himself, he is afraid of every frown, of every trouble: Christ comes and carries him through all, from the curses of the law, from the wrath of God, from sinking fears, by applying himself a suitable remedy, who died for their sins, and rose again for their justification. Now the soul goes out and is at liberty. Until you know this life, you are but poor prisoners, slaves and servants, and you do duty but in servitude, till you come to know Christ; the soul that knows Christ shall grow: many do not grow, and they think it is for want of such a grace, or for want of gifts and enlargments. But here is the fault, it is not living upon Christ, and making him your life: as you know the flowers and roots that are in the earth peep up their heads in spring, as if they were rejoicing to see a jubilee. So does a soul that hath been tugging under the law, that hath not known Christ. When Christ comes to shine on the soul, the soul comes to look up and to breathe in a new air. Now Christ appears to his soul, he, as it were, hears a new voice, "Come away my beloved, the winter is past, the singing of birds is come," Cant. ii. 10. "My beloved spake, and said unto me, rise up my love, my fair one, and come away," Vers. 11. "For lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone," Vers. 12. The flowers appear, that is, when the glorious spring comes the sun shines warm and gloriously! And what then? The spring

is come, the flowers appear, on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land, the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs. When the soul comes to live by faith in Christ, and grow up in Christ, it puts forth green leaves. They are all withered duties that are performed out of Christ. Persons may make a great discourse of religion, and be divided into parties, and they will all pretend to own Christ; whereas if they are examined, they deny Christ. But the souls that do live on Christ, they do bring forth fruit. What is the law but the winter to the soul! *Arise, saith Christ, my love, my fair one and come away, for lo the winter is past, the rain is over.* A man you know cannot travel in rain, because of the floods. The floods of God's wrath are dried up when you come to know Christ. The rain is sweet and pleasant when it comes down moderately? but when it comes down hastily and in an abundant manner, it causes floods. Whatever a soul does, until it knows God in Christ, there are floods of wrath between God and them. But when a soul comes to know Christ, all God's dealing are like moderate rain. "Rise up my love and come away, for lo the winter is past, the rain is over;" no rain to hinder you from God, no rain to keep you from the enjoyment of him: mild all your mercies are as rain; ay, and all your afflictions too: Then you may go through all trials cheerfully to heaven; you may meet God smiling on you in every trouble and affliction. After a great

rain, how doubtingly does a man go on his journey? there are great floods of water; I cannot go on with comfort, I fear deep gulfs in the way; but when the floods are dried up he goes forward comfortably. So does a soul when he comes to live on Christ, he goes forward with joy. We may say to a christian, you have great afflictions, and great temptations; but it is all sweet; there is no fear of God's anger, Christ hath taken all that away. The more I pray, saith the believer, the more I am encouraged to pray, the more I do act faith, the stronger I find my faith; but till you come to believe in this Christ, to make him your life, you go on very feebly, very doubtingly; and the soul many times cries out, I faint, I fear I shall not come to glory when I have done all: and many under convictions go back again, and cast off religion. What is the matter? Truly, I fear I shall not hold out, I shall not reach heaven at last. But when you come to know Christ, saith the soul, I know whatever I meet with I shall be brought home safe to glory. O then what miserable doctrine is that of falling from grace! As if Christ would bring believers half way to heaven and then leave them. Hath this glorious Redeemer undertaken this for the believer, and at last will he leave him? No, no; if you have made Christ your life, you shall certainly be brought home safe to glory.

Secondly, If it be so that a believer's life is

wrapt up in Christ's life, then a believer lives a happy life.

I shall branch these forth into several particulars, to shew wherein this happiness consists.

First, He that lives on Christ lives an happy life, because it is a suitable life to an immortal soul; while persons live upon any thing below Christ, it is nothing but a little dust, a little earth. What is gold, or silver, or honour, or life, or liberty without Christ? Such is the nature of the soul, that it is not fitted to live upon gross, material and perishing things, as the body doth. The food of every creature is agreeable to its nature. One cannot subsist upon that which another doth, as we see among several sorts of animals. What is food to one, is none to another. In the same place there is found a root which is fit for swine, a stalk which is food for sheep, a flower which feeds the bee, and a seed on which the birds live. The sheep cannot live on the root as the swine doth, nor the bird on the flower as the bee doth, but every one feeds upon the plants, which are agreeable to its nature; so 'tis here, our bodies being of an earthly material nature, can live upon things earthly and material, as most agreeable to him that can relish and suck sweetness out of these things: but the soul can find nothing therein suitable to its nature and appetite, it must have spiritual food, or perish.

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Now Christ is the only suitable life to an immortal soul. A precious soul must have

something precious to live upon; there is nothing can purchase the redemption of the soul: no one can redeem his brother's soul, that is too precious, Psal. xlix. 7, 8. *None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.* Every thing is below this immortal soul; none can redeem his brother's soul; no, not by his riches, nor by his prayers or duties, without Christ become his life. The redemption of the soul is too precious to be bought by any duties that can be done; prayers, or tears, or fasting, cannot buy a soul; therefore it must be a precious Christ that must be the life of the soul; for he is suitable to an immortal soul; as we speak concerning our natural constitutions. When health is wanted, we say the person must have that which is suitable; if they give him food, we tell him he wants phyfic; if he have phyfic, we tell him he wants air; if he have this, we tell him he wants contentment; and so if they do not hit on that which is suitable, the man is lost: A man may be killed with food as well as for want of it; and likewise with phyfic as well for want of it: So if we do not hit on that which is suitable, it is the destruction of the body. So if we do not hit on that which is suitable to the soul, it is the death of the soul. Suppose a great many persons endeavoured to make a cure, but they miss of that which is suitable, then there can be no cure wrought. The poor papists think to save their souls by trusting to

their own merits, and their feigned purgatory ; but alas ? they miss the mark. So some carnal protestants, they will do many things, and think to gain eternal life. When they are convinced of sin, they will run to duty ; they do well ; but if they make that their saviour, there they miss the suitable good. Some they go to reformation, they do well ; but that will not do, if rested on ; or to trust their own endeavours, or own purposes, they settle on a false bottom, all miss the mark of this glorious high calling in Christ Jesus. It were therefore too brutish and unreasonable, of a man that understood the nature of his own soul, to chear it up with the stores of earthly provisions made for it, as he

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did, Luke xii. 20. " I will say to my soul, soul, thou hast laid up goods for many years, eat, drink,

and be merry." Alas ! the soul can no more eat, drink, and be merry with carnal things, than the body with spiritual and immaterial things ; it cannot feed upon the bread that perisheth, it can relish no more in the best and daintiest fare of an earthly growth, than in the white of an egg : but bring it to a reconciled God in Christ, to the covenant of grace, and the sweet promises of the gospel ; set before it the joys, comforts and earnestness of the Spirit ; and if it be a sanctified, renewed soul, it can make a rich feast upon these. " These make a feast of fat things full of marrow," as is expressed, Isa. xxv. 6. Spiritual things are proper for a spiritual and immaterial soul. If a phys-

cian gives a thousand medicines, and miss of the right, the man dies. Every man walks in the name of his God, but how many are ignorant of Christ, who is the life of the soul? Now notwithstanding all duties and performances, they want a precious Christ for a precious soul. At first man lived on his own works, but when he sinned, the soul had an immortal stroke, that can never be healed by all his works: It must be Christ that must redeem his immortal soul. When Adam had sinned, God said, Thou shalt die, that is, in dying thou shalt die a double death; while he lived, he lived a dying life. To live on Christ is a suitable life; a precious Christ for a precious soul is suitable. For,

First, The redemption of the soul is precious; they are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. & Eph. i. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* Now this redemption becomes not the soul, till a soul lives on Christ; but this redemption is suitable to a soul under the wrath of God, under sin, and under guilt.

Secondly, Pardoning grace is very precious: And it is in Christ alone that the soul can be pardoned. Pardon is a precious jewel to an immortal soul. It is only living and laying hold on Christ, that this pardoning grace is conveyed to the soul. *Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven him, whose iniquity is covered.*

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Rom. viii. 32. Psal. i. 2. An immortal soul is precious in its being; yet for want of a pardon is miserable to all eternity, because of its precious excellency and nature, that wants the highest perfection to live upon him alone; and not having him to be their life, their death is more miserable than any creature; because other creatures, when they die, there is an end of their misery. If a man be condemned to die, that is a malefactor, if under the sense of his miserable end, looks upon himself better never to have been born, better never to have lived on earth, than to make such an end. A soul out of Christ is the most miserable creature that can be; for the excellency of the immortal soul is cast down to the greatest misery, because it wants that, which alone is the soul's cure and happiness.

Thirdly, Christ is suitable to the soul, in that there is a righteousness suitable to cover the soul. All the gold, silver, and jewels in the world, will not be of any account to an immortal soul, when it stands naked before God. But Christ's righteousness is a precious garment, that cloaths the soul that is naked in sin. Buy of me white raiment, thou art poor, miserable and naked; "but I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be cloathed, and that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear." Here is a cloathing for the

soul, or else it will remain naked for ever, and have nothing to keep off the wrath of God.— When a soul is convinced and awakened, and affected with the love of Christ, when the beams of his divine love and grace break into the soul embracing Christ, what a quick sight and sense hath a soul of divine comforts and blessings? And on the other hand, what a quick sight and sense hath a soul of the wrath of God, that is awakened under the sense of its guilt and misery. Many have stifled their conviction, being swallowed up in sensuality, and are apt to forget the awakenings of conscience by reason of the hardness of their hearts, and blindness of their minds; but when God comes to awaken thee thoroughly, that ye shall not sleep again, then the soul hath a deep sense of the wrath of God. If you could have spoken with Judas before he hanged himself, he would have told you, he had hell begun here. If you could have spoke with Cain, he would tell you he found the terrors of hell while here on earth. Were we to speak to despairing souls yet out of hell, they will tell you their souls are naked to divine vengeance; apply to them what comforts you will, there is nothing will do them good, without an application of Christ to their souls; and as they are awakened here, so they will feel another day what they now fear, Psal. xc 11. What is suitable to the soul but Christ? Have not many gone with all their gifts, parts, and duties to hell? what will serve this immortal soul but the robes of Christ's righte-

ousness? that alone will save from the wrath of God, and will alone bring the soul into the favour and love of God: therefore to know and behold Christ, is the only suitable good for an immortal soul. We say, when we see a man raised from death, by the use of means, how happy it was he was directed to that means or physician. Ah! but thrice happy, yea, everlastingly happy art thou, if thou art directed to know Christ, for his is the only righteousness that can cloath you to stand in God's presence, and be saved from the wrath to come. Then further, as there is in Christ precious pardon and precious righteousness to cover the soul: So there is precious peace suitable. When a man hath not peace with God, he is a miserable wretched man. For a man to be followed up and down wherever he goes with the wrath of a sin-revenging God, that he cannot come to God, but wherever he goes he is afraid divine vengeance will seize him. What a dreadful state is it!

Fourthly, To have Christ our life is suitable, because Christ lives for ever, and your soul lives for ever, and you must have something to uphold them for ever. All the saints in heaven, though they live for ever, and all the angels, though they live for ever, they cannot help you, if you have not Christ for yours. If Christ, who is at God's right hand is not your life, where will your immortal souls sink! how happy is it to be provided for an immortal life! *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; The*

sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre: Psal. xlv.

6. The soul liveth for ever, and therefore a

Mr. Marcot, on the short good, tho' never so full, is Parable of the ten not commensurate to it. There Virgins.

must be *certitudo æternæ fruitionis*. There must be a never-dying life, and that must be a life wrapt up in Christ. Your life is hid with Christ in God; ere long you will all go out of this world, and must appear before God; and if you have not Christ for your life, what will ye do? What a folly is it to make any thing your hope below Christ; be it riches, honors, or duties? Alas! these will all fail you. Saith John the Baptist, I live a decreasing life. "He must increase, but I must decrease," John iii. 20. but he is yesterday and to-day the same for ever; but all other things will wither and die. Therefore how good is it to live in Christ. Take a soul naked out of the body, and shew it all the riches, honors, and blessings of the world; Alas! they can do it no good. Saith the man, my soul that lives for ever, that never dies. It is immortal life that my soul must be bound up in; so that I say, to live on Christ is a suitable life, in that it is suitable to a soul that lives for ever. We see persons are careful that they may lay up something to help them when they cannot work, and are careful to lay up something for their children; and alas; will you provide for a mortal life, for a poor dying body, and will you not provide for your immortal, ever-living, never-dying souls? O lay hold on Christ now, that you

may live for ever ! Ere long you must be gone from hence, and then no more praying, nor hearing. And you that rest on duties, ere long you can rest no more on them ; and you that are careless and formal in duties, or negligent of them, ere long you will have no more opportunities : And you that are careless of getting Christ, ere long you will have no more offers of Christ. There are two sorts of fools I have minded, mentioned in the holy scriptures. First, The fool that laid up much on earth, but did not live to spend it. And the next, The fool that laid up so little, and lived beyond it. In Luke xii. 29. We have an account of the fool that laid up a great deal on earth ; he thought he had a long time to live ; saith he, *Soul, take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years.* This was a fool indeed, for he had not provided for, nor thought, what would become of his immortal soul. Thou fool, hast thou not thought of thy immortal soul ? Of thy eternal state ? Thou hast laid up for thy body for a long time, *this night shall thy soul be required of thee*, thou shalt live no longer here. What, take thought for barns, for riches, and no thought for an immortal soul ! No thoughts of a Christ to save thee to all eternity ? Many will take great thought about the things of this world, but no thought for a Christ, for their immortal souls. You have enough laid up for many years as you think, but it may be not for many moments. If you have not a Christ,

you are not safe for one moment. And what will you do if the Lord say to thee, *this night shall thy soul be required of thee?* O fool, hast thou not something laid up for time to come, when thou hast not an hour to live? Hast thou had thoughts for the things of this life, when thou hast not spent one thought for the things of another life? This mad fool, he laid up goods for longer than he had time to enjoy them. Considered for a great while to come, and yet laid not up any thing for his immortal soul, that was to live for ever, *this night shall thy soul be required of thee*; thou shalt have no more time in this world, and hast thou not laid up for eternity? O man or woman, what a fool art thou, that dost not look after Christ! That dost not seek in good earnest for thy immortal soul, to be happy to all eternity! The second fools that are mentioned, are, they that out-lived their estate, they had not enough to keep them. I warrant, you will say, they wanted care in this world; and you shall hear many worldly men say, That will not do, I will take care to lay up something for a spending time; but it is not worldly riches we are concerned about, but higher matters, it is spiritual things. The foolish virgins out-lived their estates, they survived them, they had not enough to maintain them; my meaning is, they wanted saving grace, they took much pains in outward truths, yet wanted grace to carry them safe to glory. You may live on duties and performances, and the out-side of religion;

and I tell you your immortal souls will out-live your duties, and be undone for not having a Christ. Your souls will out-live all external duties and ordinances, and if you have not lived on Christ, you are undone. The foolish virgins thought they had done very well, and had got enough to keep them to all eternity; they set out with the wise, and kept along with them; but here was the difference, the one had Christ in them, and the other was without him; the one had Christ in their hearts, and the other had only the notions of Christ in their heads; the one lived on Christ in their duties, and the other lived on their duties without Christ; the wise virgins lamps kept burning, because they had the oil of grace, and Christ was in them, the hope of glory; but the foolish virgins they wanted oil in their lamps; yet what confidence had they that their condition was good, which did appear by their confidence to the very last, Mat. xxv. 10. *Afterward came also the other virgins, and said, Lord, Lord, open to us; sure we have some part in thee, sure we have some treasure here: No, saith Christ, you have none at all, I know you not.* They begged oil of the wise, *Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out:* They out-lived all their duties and gifts, and were miserably poor for want of grace. My friends, be you never so outwardly religious, if you have not Christ in you, you will out-live all your duties and righteousness, prayers and tears, and all duties will be over; and if you have not Christ to be your righteousness, you will

be very poor at last : None so poor as those that lie down in the grave without a Christ. *Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out :* We have no oil. What have you been doing all this while ? What, so long a praying people ? So long hearers, so long professors, and have you not a Christ for your souls ? They thought they had oil enough in their lamps, but were miserably mistaken. Many think certainly if they pray and hear, they shall go to heaven ; if they come to the Lord's supper, and are baptized, and have other ordinances, they shall go to heaven. Why friends, the foolish virgins were all this, yea, and more than this ; for many persons may have scandalous lives outwardly, but these were called virgins ; they walked so uprightly, none could charge them with hypocrisy ; none could say black was their eye, till at last they slept when others slumbered. The foolish set their faces heavenward, as well as the wise ; only the hypocrites they have their faces one way, and row another, as water-men do. But what was the difference ? The wise virgins made Christ their life, and the foolish lived upon their own duties without Christ. Many think themselves very well, because they do perform duties, and attend on ordinances, and can discourse of Christ ? But do you know what it is to have Christ your life ? When the foolish virgins found Christ was come, they cried, alas ! We are undone ; we have lived on our own stock, and we want a life beyond all that we have lived ; “ And the

foolish said to the wise, give us of your oil:" Have you no oil to spare us? No, none: All the angels in heaven, nor saints in heaven cannot help a poor sinner, that hath not made Christ his life. He that hath most of Christ, cannot part with any of Christ; he that hath most grace cannot part with any when he comes to die. O, saith the graceless soul, when he comes to die, give me of your oil, have not you some to spare? The ungodly husband will wish himself in the condition of the godly wife, the ungodly parent of the godly child, the ungodly children in the condition of the godly parent. If the ungodly child should cry to the godly parent, Oh for some of your grace! Oh spare me some of your grace! The answer will be, no, no, we have little enough for ourselves; would we had more grace, pray go and buy for yourselves: But alas! 'Tis too late, we trifled with Christ and with grace: I could go home after I heard a sermon and be content, and thought it was well enough, though I never minded it any more: I was told, If I had not Christ I was undone: It was preached to me, if I had not Christ's righteousness, I should be found naked; but I did not mind it, nor regard it; but now it is too late. I indeed performed some duties, because I was afraid of hell, and because conscience would not let me alone. I kept to hearing and praying, but to make Christ my life, that I was ignorant of. Whatever was preached to me of him, to make him my life; whatever was preached to me of him to make

sure of him for my own, I thought I could spare him well enough, I thought I could live on my own duties. Alas! You may be full of duties and yet have an heart empty of Christ: You may keep a Sabbath outwardly, and yet have no enjoyment of God inwardly; you may perform duty, but if you have not Christ your life, you will survive all you have, you will live and spend all.

An hypocrite may go very far, his profession may carry him very far, and yet fall short at last. God doth not pluck away the vizard at first, but letteth them proceed. The foolish virgins took their lamps, and went boldly out to meet Christ along with the wise. More than some will be persuaded to, that will hardly now stir a foot for Christ, they continued so until the bridegroom tarried so long beyond their expectation, that they fall asleep.

What a dreadful thing is it for professors to have nothing but what they may live and spend, and be undone when they come to die? Your immortal souls will survive all your prayers, and all your Sabbaths; and if Christ is not your life, you are undone for ever. This was the case of those foolish virgins: The fool in the gospel provides for many years to come, and lives but a short time. And the others, they pretend to get something for their souls, and live to spend all. You may be undone for living on your profession, as well as those who are enemies to it. Many will say, they have not time to look after the things of another world, no time

to mind Christ, nor seriously to think of their latter end. Alas! it is not being on our knees in a morning, and remember the Lord no more all the day; then to go hurrying on in the world, never minding Christ nor your precious souls. On the other hand, there are foolish professors, that make their own duties their righteousness, and so think they have no need of Christ. The one lays up more for himself, than he lives for to spend. The other is so foolish, he lays up so little, (not having Christ) that he spends all, and so is miserable; but let us have a care we are not those fools. You that are professors, have a care you do not die poor, that you do not live upon your duties, and not get Christ for your souls to live upon. The foolish said to the wise, *give us of your oil:* But the wise answered and said, *not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.* Ah! How fain would every one of you have a Christ when you come to die! How fain would every one of you have grace when you come to die! You will go home, it may be, this day, and a few days more, and sit quietly at your tables without Christ; but when you come to die, you will cry out, O that I had a Christ! It is hard venturing your immortal souls on this line of time, thinking it will reach out longer; and you do not know how soon this thread of your life may be cut asunder; and when you come to die, and are without Christ, you will wish, O that I had closed

with Christ when I was persuaded to do it. You are always ready that know Christ, but never ready, whatever you do, without Christ; if you have performed ten thousand duties, and kept a thousand fasts, without Christ, you are undone. *And when they came the door was shut; The door of the kingdom, the door of grace, the door of mercy, the door of happiness, of comfort. What, the door shut? What, the door of heaven shut against me! O where shall I go? What shall I do? I am shut out; without the kingdom, without God, without Christ, in everlasting burnings. Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.* Thus ready will they be to call Christ Lord, that never took him to be their husband. *Lord, Lord, open to us,* we are come, we are come, we knock now. O how earnestly do they knock now! You that coldly desire Christ now, that indifferently seek after Christ now, you will at last knock and call earnestly when it is too late.

Those persons that will not in time come to Christ for grace, they will knock when it is too late for entrance into glory.

There are dreadful out-cries in this world, but there will be three dreadfuller cries which a person that dies without Christ will send forth in the other world.

The first dreadful cry in this world is, a malefactor that is sensible of his misery when he is condemned. What an out-cry, when it is said thou must die? O how he doth cry out for mercy! The second dreadful out-cry is, when a ship

suffers shipwreck, and the mariners or passengers are sinking into the sea, then what a dreadful out-cry is there with them, that before were cursing and swearing!

The third dreadful out-cry is, when soldiers or rebels besiege a city, and put men, women and children to the sword; but a person that lives and dies without Christ, there are three dreadfuller cries.

First, A soul that is awakened departing this life, takes a view of his miserable state in the other world, when conscience drags him before God's tribunal, and there is condemned by the law of God; the soul cries out, Lord, must I be shut up under thy eternal wrath forever? There he sees the judge condemning him, the law condemning him, conscience condemning him; he can look no way but he is amazed; above him a sin-revenging God, below him everlasting flames. O what a dreadful out-cry will a condemned soul make! You may know by these foolish virgins, *Lord, Lord open to us*, what a dreadful out-cry will there be for a condemned sinner to appear before a sin-revenging God. You are all condemned in Adam, and if you have not a Christ you will be condemned to all eternity; when the last moment comes, what an out-cry will there be, Lord, Lord, must I to hell for ever! Must I be damned for ever! Yea, soul, for thou hast no part nor portion in Christ.

Secondly, As seamen and mariners when they

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suffer shipwreck, and are sinking, make a dreadful cry; so a soul that is out of the body, that hath not Christ; all your duties, and profession, and comforts, all your righteousness, and your souls thinking together. O what a dreadful cry will there be! My hope is perished, my righteousness is perished, my duties abhorred. Wo is me, I am undone for ever!

Thirdly, What a dreadful out-cry is there, when a city is besieged and plundered, and all the men, women and Children put to fire and sword! So when Christless persons must appear before God's tribunal, the sword of divine Justice meets the soul. The angel that stood at the gate of Paradise had a flaming sword in his hand; the justice of God, that flaming sword, will you meet at heaven-gate: soul, no entrance here, you must for ever lie in the prison of hell, till your debts are paid; you have no surety, you have no Christ, you have no grace; then you must for ever depart into everlasting burnings, now too late, when justice hath taken hold of them; legions of devils hauling them down to the bottomless pit: They cry, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, when their lamps are gone out. Now Lord we see our sparks dying before they reach heaven. O pardon this our hypocrisy! And O give of thy oil! Thou art the olive-tree, pour out thy oil into our vessels. Had they with the wise virgins oil in their lamps, saving grace in their hearts, they had been ready, and entered with Christ; No, but they would not come to Christ; and see now

the gate was shut upon them ; now they cry, Lord open to us ; they would not come to him for a wedding-garment, but they would be beholden to him to let them enter into the feast

Mr. Murcot. without one ; though heaven would have held them but a little while, if they had entered in that condition.

Next, This life is a suitable life, because it is a glorious life. Alas ! You live a miserable life till you know Christ : A professor without Christ is a poor empty person. You read of a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness.

What was the earth ? A dark chaos before the glorious sun, that glorious light, came. What is a poor soul in this poor house of clay, till you come to know Jesus Christ, till you come to live Christ ? We have a dark chaos, but when you come to live Christ, this is a new heaven in the soul, and a new earth ; every part of the soul, every member of the body is put into a new frame. O saith the soul, let me not act but for Christ, let me not walk but with Christ, let me not be employed but for Christ, let me not live but to Christ ; it may be you will give us the hearing of a sermon on the Lords day, but what mould are you cast in all the week ? Alas ! What folly and madness is it for to be seeking, looking, waiting and watching for what is not, for what will not do you good ? Our eye is fixed, our thoughts are fixed, our hands are employed, but is it for

Christ? Can you say you desire nothing in comparison of Christ? Or are your thoughts swallowed up in the world? Where you have had one for Christ, it may be you have had many thousands for the world. To be a professor, and not live on Christ, it is as if a dead man should be dress'd with the cloaths of a living man, and should have meat dish'd out and set before him to eat, who yet remains dead, and the meat untasted.

Persons may make external profession, and have ordinances administered to them, but if you do not know Christ, and live Christ, what profit will you have in all? What is the chaff to the wheat? Most of the sermons you hear, you may have the notions of religion; but if Christ is not made manifest to your soul, you have but the shell without the kernel, the chaff without the wheat. He that knows Christ, he that lives Christ, is above that soul, let him live never so noble a life, that knows not Christ. Therefore the prophet saith, *That a wise child is better than an old and foolish king*, Eccles. iv. 13.

A wise Christian (though he is never so little in grace and knowledge) that knows Christ, is better than the greatest person in knowledge that doth not know Christ: Better is the poorest, lowest Christian, than the greatest noble in the land that doth not know Christ.

Now I shall shew in some particulars the glory of this life. To live Christ, *First*, If you come to live Christ, it is a glorious life, for there is the beginning of glory: Whatever you

do, you never come to have glory begun, till you come to live on Christ by faith, Phil. i. 6. He that hath begun the good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; he that justifies, he glorifies. We are called to eternal glory by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. v. 10. If we have not Christ ours; eternal life will never be ours, Col. i. 27. *Christ in you the hope of glory.* All the pearls of a Christian's crown of glory are the purchase of Christ's blood. As soon as a soul begins to know Christ, he begins an heaven on earth. Let earth and hell do what they will, glory is begun; the world, and devil, and temptations may toss you, but they are come too late to destroy you, there is immortal life and glory begun, the immortal seed is sowed in the soul; grace in the soul is glory in the believer: Christ dwelling in the soul, is the beginning of glory; you never come to know the life of glory, till you know Christ; and when you come to live on Christ, you are in the way to glory, and shall as sure come there, as the saints and angels now in glory. This is the comfort and stay of a believer, when he comes to know Christ, he is certainly linked to eternal glory.

Secondly, To live Christ is a glorious life; for you are changed from glory to glory into the same image; for there is a glorious union between Christ and a believer; there is the natural faculties, there is the same rational soul: But the soul hath new qualities, being chan-

ged by Christ dwelling in the soul; they are changed in their understandings, their affections, their wills. It may be compared to iron put into the fire; while iron remains red hot, and the fire is in it, if you beat the iron to pieces, you cannot separate it from the fire; knock but the least piece of iron, fire is in every piece, yet the iron is not the fire, nor the fire the iron; yet the iron is in the likeness of fire: so the soul is not so changed into the image of Christ, as not to retain its own natural faculties, but by reason of Christ dwelling in it, is changed in its qualities from evil to good. So there is the glory of Christ appearing in all the actions of a Christian, tho' they may have many infirmities, yet all that they principally design, is the glory of God. When fire is in the iron, you cannot separate it; you cannot say that iron is without fire, nor fire without iron: so in this life, you may see a saint hath many imperfections, but yet Christ is in him, swaying his heart and life with the sceptre of his righteousness: Though there are the same faculties, yet the qualities are all made new; So though there is corruption in prayer, and weakness in faith, and weakness in love; yet there is true love, and true faith and repentance, there is something seen of Christ in all his infirmities, in every faculty of the soul. What a glorious change is it to be changed into the image of Christ! The beams of the sun have several effects, some things it withers, some things it revives. The gospel of Christ and the good-

ness of God, that melt the heart of a saint, hardens the heart of an impenitent sinner; but the soul that hath union with Christ, that Christ is his life, the love of Christ conforms the soul to Christ. There is the meekness of Christ, though not in perfection; there is the love of Christ, the humility of Christ, though not in perfection, the self-denial of Christ; there is the patience of Christ, though not in perfection, but through Christ you are pardoned.

Dr. Owen on
the Spirit.

The soul that is changed into the glory of Christ, hath natural corruption, natural backwardness; but Christ being their perfect head and spotless righteousness, they are pure and lovely in God's eye. Jesus Christ, God man, hath all the glorious ideas of God's image and grace shining in him, as in a glass, he reflects the same in and by the glass of the gospel in the hearts of believers, who by faith contemplating, are by the efficacious working of the Spirit of grace transformed into the same glorious image, even from glory to glory, from one degree of glorious grace unto another. Thus the believing soul by faith contemplating the wisdom, meekness, patience, kindness, justice, &c. of God shining in Christ, is by the effectual concurrence of the Spirit of Christ transformed into a wise, meek, patient, kind and just spirit. Faith, by contemplating the glory of God in Christ, brings into the soul spiritual ideas of the same glorious image, a divine light and life

bearing some resemblance to the life of God, or divine nature; so that Christ, the essential glass of God, hath not only a manifestative, but also transformative, changing glory, shining in them.

Mr. Gale's Treatise of the saints amity with Christ.

Beloved, have you not all immortal souls? What would you have your souls be like when you come to die? Would you have them like the devil? Would you have the pride and envy of hell, the covetousness of hell? Or would you have the image of Christ stamped on you, that you may live Christ, and lead an humble life, a meek life, a self-denying life, an holy godly life? What likeness would you have your souls appear in out of your body? Whose image and stamp would you have them bear? Most men will live to themselves, and make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof: And some live to be revenged of others, to get the world on their side. The lusts persons seek to fulfil are innumerable to speak of; but how would you have your souls appear? What condition would you have them in? Would you have them in Christ? O then beg Christ may be your life! Beg you may be changed from glory to glory, into his image; every day of a believer's life, he is going from glory to glory.

Poor, wretched, ignorant professors! What do you think will become of you ere long, if Christ is not your life? Eternal death will be your portion. You see many imperfections in a believer, yet he is perfect in Christ, being

changed into the image and glory of Christ. A believer, all his works are works of grace, all his walking, walks of grace; all his actions, actions of grace; and in all that he doth, there is a glory on it, through Christ his glorious Lord. They that live on external duties, they will give you the hearing of a sermon, and away; they seek not to know Christ, but they will be found as dreadfully miserable as the Turk or Heathen that never heard of Christ; for notwithstanding their profession, they are swallowed up in the world. Take a covetous man, his heart is on the world. Take a gluttonous man, his heart is set to make his belly his God. Take a man that lives on Christ, his heart is knit there, he cleaves to the Lord with full purpose of heart.

Thirdly, It is a glorious life, because you have the hope of glory: You never will have the hope of glory, till you have Christ living in you; *Christ in you the hope of glory*, 1 Tim. i. 1. If a person be without Christ, he is without all true hope of salvation; there is neither hope of the glory of God, nor rejoicing in the hope, while a person is without Christ. What, have you hope of glory? But, have you a good hope? If you come to live Christ, then you have a good hope; if you have Christ in you, then as sure as Christ is in you, you shall come to glory. Who is in you? Who lives in you? We know our next neighbour, we know our familiar friend or acquaintance. Who do you converse with? Who is your near neighbour?

Christ or the world, Christ or vain thoughts, Christ or carnality? Is Christ in you? If Christ is in you, then he reigns in you, and you converse most with him. What is your daily food, your livelihood? Mistake me not, I would not have you neglect your daily calling, I hope you understand me better: But, what do you make the chief of your aims and ends? What takes up your heart most? Does the love of Christ, the mercy of Christ, the peace of Christ affect you most? If so, I tell you, you live a glorious life. I warrant you think that they that conversed with Christ on earth were happy; I tell you, there were thousands saw Christ's face on earth, that shall never see his face in glory. It may be you think if you come and hear a sermon, you have conversed enough with Christ for all the week, though you never had one precious thought of Christ; but to have Christ your life, you have a glorious life. Soul is thy heart wrapt in Christ? What would you desire, if you were to have your wishes granted? Is it Christ? more of Christ? To live more to Christ? To enjoy more of Christ? If it is so, you live a glorious life! there is more glory in one believer, than in all creatures on earth beside. When Chrysostom was put to silence, said some, better the whole world were left in darkness, than such a glorious light should be put out. Now if the preaching of Christ be so glorious, what is the life of Christ in the believer.

Fourthly, To live Christ is a glorious life,

for there comes a glorious train with Christ, all the graces of the Spirit.

Believers are God's habitations, Eph. ii. 22. You are the terrestrial wherein the king of glory keeps his abode, till you be removed to abide with him in heaven. If we did but consider, and our eyes were opened to see what a train of hellish lusts dwell in us before Christ is in us, we should be amazed; the apostle tells you of many of them: While you are fleshly, and not know Christ, I tell you, whatever you are in profession, you are what the apostle speaks, Gal. v. 9. *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; as if he should say, I will not foul my mouth with what dwells in a carnal heart.* May be you may say, many that have no grace abhor many of these things. I answer, It may be, the devil may not lead into all at once; but the works of the flesh are manifest in unconverted persons. What man is there that knows not Christ, but loves something below Christ, and that is idolatry, though you do not worship a strange God. Do you love a strange God? Is God first and last? highest and best? Most prized and loved? Is all well when Christ is enjoyed? Do you not complain more for other things than for Christ? Hatred is a very reigning sin; variance, emulations, wrath, strife, many sins dwell in the

heart, all sin is rooted in corrupt nature : but what is meet for sale he brings forth ; like a shop-keeper, he brings forth goods that are fit for sale, he hath all sorts, but he doth not sell all sorts at once. So the sinner hath all sin in him to be brought forth ; Satan tempts him sometimes to one sin, sometimes to another. When the devil comes to buy, the sinner is furnished with all sorts of sins for him, and sells what the devil pleases to buy. But when Christ comes, what train does he bring with him ? He brings a glorious train. verse 22. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ; against such there is no law ;* the law hath nothing to say against them, for Christ is formed upon their heart. O what a glorious train does Christ bring ! When Christ is your life, you come to Christ, and walk with Christ, what a glorious train of graces possess the soul ! Now the angry man, the wrathful person is a meek, an humble person ; the worldly man is come to love Christ, and God, and the kingdom of heaven, and the saints, and holiness ; he is come to have the fruit of the Spirit. O what a glorious life is it to live Christ ! It sets Christ on the throne, and unthrones ungodliness ; and at the last day Christ will set you on his throne, and crown you with glory. Christ and the believer are all one, he dwells in you, and you live on him. Alas ! To be a professor, and walk at random, to walk in the suburbs of hell, while we profess to be citizens

of heaven. I profess it is a shame some professors should profess religion: Blessed be God that many are waiting on God; but till you know Christ, there is a black train in the soul. The hearts of many swell, if they know but a little of the letter, if they can but speak or discourse; but when Christ comes, there is a new frame of heart; not new in faculties, but in qualities. O what a glorious life it is to live Christ! This life is not to be paralleled. If I had the tongue of an angel, I could not set forth the life of a soul that lives Christ; it is so far beyond the life of the carnal professor, that makes me repeat it over and over: There is so much difference between this life and the life of carnal professors, that they do not deserve to be once named in the day the believer that lives on Christ is spoke of. What, for Christ to have union with the believer? For the believer to have union with Christ? It is such a mystery, that the angels desire to look into the mystery of it. Those that live not this life, tho' they make a profession, they are cold professors, ignorant professors, and indeed nothing but professors.

Fifthly, It is a glorious life, because it is the richest life you can live in: You never live richly till you live holy; and you never live holy, till you come to live on Christ, *Of his fulness have we all received grace for grace.* There is not only in Christ a fulness of abundance, but also fulness of redundance; there is an everlasting fulness in Christ, as a fountain overflows,

and yet remains full, grace for grace, or grace upon grace, abundance of grace, and the increases of grace one by another; there is all good in Christ that poor sinners want. *Omne bonum in summo bono*, all good is in the chiefest good.

You may see corn that is scattered on a thatched house spring up, but it soon withers; it is not like corn sown in its natural soil. You may see some new professors under some convictions, how hot and zealous they are, but it soon withers, there being no root: But when a soul is planted in Christ, it is got in good ground, it is not thorny ground, or stony ground. Many persons are very unhappy; they are very diligent to do something to attain happiness, yet miss of happiness at last. Many professors are very unhappy, they make a great noise of religion, yet never come to know Christ, so never thrive in religion. You never thrive nor lead a rich life, till you know Christ; all treasures of wisdom dwell in him that is the true wisdom; and the Lord humble this generation, because they exalt Christ no more, live Christ no more: It may be you pray, hear, and perform duty; but alas! All this is nothing till we come to know Christ. The Lord humble us, I say, you and me, and all of us, for we are all fools till we know Christ. I do not condemn arts and sciences, but yet I say it is all nothing to the knowledge of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii. 3. Saul, would you know God?

It must be in Christ: Would you be wise? It must be in Christ: Would you have true learning? It must be in Jesus Christ: Would you know the glorious mystery of the gospel? It must be in Christ: What is all learning, all knowledge, all understanding? (though all this is good in its place.) If you can tell the name of God in all tongues, what doth this signify? If you do not know God in Christ, you are but a poor creature, the treasure of all wisdom is in Christ, and Christ will lead you to the Father, the fountain of all wisdom; this is a rich life to live Christ.

First, You are enriched with the presence of God. When you know Christ, then you dwell in the presence of God; the devils dwell in his wrathful presence; all of us this day dwell in God's general presence, the saints only dwell in God's gracious presence. When you come to know Christ, you dwell in the special presence of God, Psal. cxxx. ult. *The upright shall dwell in thy presence.* None upright but in Christ; none perfect but through Christ. *Surely the righteous shall give thanks to thy name, the upright shall dwell in thy presence.* There is no man upon earth that hath righteousness in himself; no, not one: There is no man upright but in Christ. When Christ is become yours, then God takes up his dwelling with you: When Christ dwells in you, then the great God takes up his abode with you; then you have the gracious presence of God go where you will.

Secondly, When you come to live to Christ,

you are enriched with the glorious benefits of Christ; all that Christ died for, is yours, redemption, justification, sanctification. The riches of grace, and riches of glory, is all your's. What, saints in Christ, and poor? It was never found, and can never be found: A soul in Christ cannot be poor, all the riches of heaven, the riches of the mercies, blessings, and comforts of this life, and that to come.

Thirdly, All the promises are your's: There is no condition you can be in, but there is a promise to supply you: Truly that is a rich man that hath a promise of supplies whatever state he is in. Though you have a great many afflictions, you have abundance of promises: You have a great many trials, and you have great promises, free promises, glorious promises, you are rich; for go with the key of faith, and you may open the promises. And whatever you take out, there is never the less left behind: That promise that supplied you some years ago, it is as full now, as it was then. If a man takes out of his bags or coffers, the more he takes out, the less he leaves behind him; but the promises are always full; go to a promise in temptation, go to a promise in desertion, go to a promise in affliction, yet they are still full; indeed sometimes faith not being lively to suck out the comfort, we think the promise is dry; but the promise is full. We are like a poor weak child to a full breast, that cannot draw out the milk. When faith is weak, we leave the comfort of the promise behind, and

cannot draw it forth. Now how came you to be enriched with these promises? Do they not flow in and through Christ? All the curses belong to them that are out of Christ; but in Christ all the promises are *Yea* and *Amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20. *For all the promises of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us in Christ.* All the promises are yea, that is, certainly true, and in him amen; to the glory of God, amen. I know it is the desire of most to be rich, then beg of God that you may know Christ, beg of God that you may love Christ, beg of God that you may live Christ; *In him all the promises are, Yea and Amen.* What, art thou not in Christ? O wretched, poor, miserable man or woman; in Christ only are promises, and the true riches, yea and amen forever. Whatever you do, go to Christ, for in him they are yea, and in him they are amen; see that by faith you go to Christ, he is the way. What rich and precious promises are in him! To take a promise, and not take Christ to be your way to the promise, is to go a wrong way to receive comfort from the promises. If ever you have a promise, it must come by Christ: If you make Christ your life, wrap up your life in Christ, as hath been discoursed, and all the promises are your's.

There is not a soul of you so full of comfort, but you have need of a promise; not one of you so well in the world, but you have need of a promise, Isa. xxxviii. 6. *By these men live.* Go

to the promises, and then living or dying, you are rich men. Ah, sirs! If the promises in Christ are not your's, I would not give a farthing for your profession; and when you come to die, you will wish you never had made a profession. But the soul that lives on Christ is happy. Blessed souls, are you tempted? Are you afflicted? Are you troubled? The promises in Christ will yield you sweet relief.

Fourthly, If you have Christ, you have all the blessings of ordinances: I tell you, though you may not enjoy that comfort as you desire, yet there is not a sermon you hear, but you are enriched by it; for if thy soul break and mourn, and long after Christ, thou art enriched; for a broken heart is worth ten thousand worlds. A broken heart, through Christ, is accepted of God, Psal. iii. 8. *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord.* The means of salvation, the preaching of the gospel, and all other ordinances; *Salvation belongs to the Lord*, compared with Eph. i. 3. where it is said, *We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus in heavenly places:* (pray mind it) *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus;* what then, who hath blessed us? How? With all spiritual blessings; all the means of grace are made blessings. What abundance of rich seed of grace is sown upon stony ground, where Christ is not known? But the blessing is upon the people of God; *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, who hath blessed us with the bles-*

sings of faith, with the blessings of hope, blessings of love, blessings of patience, blessings of the sacrament, and all the means of grace we enjoy.

You that live Christ, tho' you go mourning from a sermon, this may encourage you to wait for the blessing of the means of grace. It may be a soul may object and say, I am a poor sorrowful soul; am I blessed? Soul, thou art blessed. *Blessed are they that mourn. The contrite heart is an acceptable sacrifice to God. Blessed are they that mourn.* This is your case, sometimes you mourn, at other times you rejoice in God, and joy in the God of your salvation. You are rich in blessings; all sermons that you hear do your souls good, and all ordinances do your souls good; you are blessed when you are humbled, when you mourn, when you thirst, as well as when you rejoice. These are spiritual blessings in Christ. O Christless soul, till you know Christ, there is not one of these belongs to you. O sinners, you have innumerable curses hang over your heads, that are out of Christ, you have a book full of wo and lamentation written without and within, Ezek. ix. 10. *Many sorrows are to the wicked, but he that trusteth to the Lord, mercy compasseth him about,* Psal. xxxii. 10. Innumerable are the blessings that believer's are compassed about with. When you come to an ordinance, and think you do not meet with God, you complain, and go away mourning, you are blessed; if you go away in the dark you are blessed: How so? I blessed, that cannot see

Christ! Yes; blessed are they that trust in him, and stay themselves upon him, though they walk in darkness, and see no light. O what a rich soul art thou that livest this life of faith! You are blessed in all ordinances, all opportunities: I tell you, whatever comes, God will bless his people; God's Providence is to all the world, he takes care of the whole creation, he is wonderful in goodness and mercy; yet as a rich man that gives to many, yet in an especial manner, saith he, I must remember my children at home, my dying child, my weak child, this child, that child, every child. So God gives liberally to all, but his special blessings are reserved for his redeemed ones. O what a rich life it is to live Christ! The saint is rich in faith, rich in love, rich in peace, rich in all blessings. Then the soul admires, what, am I blessed in every condition? What, with all spiritual blessings? O Lord, not long ago I was crying out, sure God hath forsaken me! But this was your infirmity and sin. But is not Christ more precious to you than ever? Do not you long for Christ, thirst for Christ? Then you are blessed. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* Under darkness, under temptation, under every affliction you are blessed, and every sermon, and every sacrament, and every ordinance you have, you are blessed; tho' you cannot rejoice in God in all, yet you are blessed in all; tho' you go away hanging down your head. O I have not met with God! I tell you, you are blessed:

For it is said, *Blessed are they that mourn, and Blessed are the poor in spirit.*

Fifthly, You are enriched with the love of God. I do not know what you can have more to enrich you : If the love of God doth not make you rich, I am sure nothing can ; and you can never be rich if you have not the love of God, and be sure God loves you if you know Christ, he looks on you in Christ, loves you in Christ, delights in you in Christ, John xvi. 27. "For the Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God :—" God's favour maketh rich those whom God favours ; he hath grace that heals his soul, which is that that makes his happiness and is that which is the inward fashioning of every man's apprehension that makes him happy, that brings comfort to him. Pray mind, the Lord Jesus speaks with an emphasis, for *the Father himself loveth you* : You have my Father's love, a choice love indeed : And how comes this love about ? because you have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God : because you have believed in me, and made me your life : God loves you : What, God love me ! I confess it would make a Christian go comfortably through all the trials in the world, the very ardency and application of that : The heart of God is the ocean, the first rise of all love to the creature : Christ is the spring that first receives from him, and then through him all love is diffused to the creature :
God loves me, for the Father himself loved

Dr. Crisp.

you : What, God love me ! I pray how comes it about ? because you have loved me, and believed that I came out from God : You have made me your life ; you have faith in me ; and now God loves you : God never loved you, whatever you did without Christ : God abhors all out of Christ ; God elected you all in Christ, chooses you all in Christ, pardons you all in Christ : and then, Oh what immense love is this ! God loves you in Christ : O unspeakable love ! O infinite love ! this love is love that passes knowledge ; love that passes bounds ; O height and depth of love ; you that live in Christ, and believe in Christ, are rich souls : We use to say, when we see men thrive and prosper in the world, this will be a rich man : And what may you say of the saints ? O they will be rich indeed, they will have a rich portion, because they believe that Christ came out from God. O soul ! hast thou with thy heart chose Christ, with thy heart lived to Christ, with thy heart wrapt up thyself in Christ, none but Christ ? Thou art a rich soul ; for thou art already possessor of the presence of God, and it will be thy portion to live in the house of God for ever : For brethren to dwell together in love and unity, how sweet is it ! O the harmony of it ! but what a divine harmony is there in that soul where the love of God dwells ? Turn about your thoughts, turn about your ears : Hear, I beseech you, for Christ's sake ; accept of Christ, that you may have God's love : God indeed loved the elect with

everlasting love in Christ; but God's love is not manifested to you, until you believe in Christ; then all the things of this life are your's; there are many things which we cannot reach here, the price is too great: Is not that rare which costs dear? there is not a bit of bread you have (you that are saints) but it cost the blood of Christ; all your mercies are in a way of redemption; all is yours: *Paul and Apollos, and Cephas, and life, and death, and things present, and things to come; for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* May it not be said of them that know not Christ, nothing is theirs? Is not the minister yours, as well as others? Is not your bread yours, and your meat yours, and your drink yours, and cloaths yours? No, soul, they are borrowed mercies, stolen mercies, and you will be damned for them without Christ has paid for them for you: but the soul that loves Christ, his mercies are all bought: the ministers of Christ, those ambassadors of peace, are all yours in Christ: Paul is yours, Apollos is yours, and life and death is yours. You that are out of Christ, it makes my heart tremble to consider that your mercies are all to be paid for, to be reckoned for; and you that are in Christ, you may leap and rejoice at a drop of cold water and a bit of bread; Oh! It is a rich mercy, it is bought with the blood of Christ; and then at last you will be enriched, you will sit like kings in glory with your Lord and Redeemer for ever and ever.

Sixthly, It is a happy life, because it is a soul-

satisfying life, the soul cannot be satisfied with any thing below Christ; whatever a person does enjoy, whatever a person does in a way of duty, he cannot be satisfied if he hath not Christ: Take who you will, whether they be formalists, or legalists; whether moral men, or profane men; whether rich men, or poor men; or professors, that have not made Christ their life, they will tell you they want satisfaction; there is a complaint of this thing, or that thing wanting to give contentment; if they have golden duties, if they do not bring the water of life, they cannot satisfy their souls: But this life of living upon Christ doth satisfy the soul, I shall shew in these following particulars.

The Lord will satisfy her poor with bread; the poorest man that lives upon Christ, lives more plentifully than the richest man that knows not Christ, Psal. cxxxii. 5. "I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy the poor with bread:" Who is the poor? The poor is a longing person, a craving person: *The poor desire something they stand in need of*, saith the Lord: I will bless Sion's provision: It is a great mercy to have our provision blessed: We may be fed high, and yet not have healthy bodies; many fare high in means of grace, but not having a blessing with it, they do not prosper; many have been long under the means of grace, and yet not thrive nor grow in grace; saith God, *I will satisfy her poor with bread*: The poor are craving, desiring, and longing; so the longing soul in Christ shall be satisfied; they shall not want: The prophet Isaiah speaks of

spending their money for that which is not bread; which will not satisfy : But the Lord Jesus satisfies the soul, fills up the desires, whatsoever they be : Take one which is under the law and the greatest gifts and parts, but is a stranger to Christ, and one that is the poorest in gifts and parts, yet in Christ ; he hath more satisfaction than the other with all his great gifts and parts : The poorest and meanest in grace that is in Christ, lives a higher life than the richest in gifts and parts, or in wordly things, that does not know Christ ; so that it is a satisfying life to live Christ ; Here is enough for this present life, enough for hereafter ; there is enough in Christ to fill up all the faculties of the soul, John vi. 35. *I am the bread of life ; he that cometh to me shall never hunger ; he that believeth on me shall never thirst :* Coming and believing is the same ; he that comes or believes in me shall never hunger ; What, doth not a soul in Christ hunger ? Doth he not long for Christ ? Yes, but as he hungers and thirsts for Christ, he shall be filled, his wants shall be supplied : We say in our outward things, Money answers all things : But money will not satisfy the soul : But, saith Christ, *He that comes to me, I will satisfy all his desires :* He shall have contentment, supplies, satisfaction ; he shall want nothing : *I am the bread of life, I will satisfy his hunger : I am the water of life ; he that comes to me shall never thirst :* They shall never cry I perish of hunger, or I perish for thirst. The prodigal,

when he came to his father's house, he did hunger, but he had bread to satisfy his hunger: A soul believing in Christ, making Christ his life, there is enough in Christ, to fill up all the desires of the soul, and to heal all the wounds of the contrite heart. Whatever the soul desires, in Christ are eternal springs to fill up the soul; every thing that is below Christ, is too empty to satisfy an immortal soul; they are not springs, they are but cisterns; take ordinances, take away Christ, what can the ordinances do? Will not the soul wither immediately? Ordinances are but cisterns, and not springs: The Psalmist saith, *All my springs are in thee*, Psal. lxxxvii. 7. Doth a soul desire to love God? Hath the soul a desire to be satisfied with love, with beauty, with the glory of Christ? There are divine springs from Christ, who is an overflowing and everflowing fountain to the souls of believers to satisfy all their desires. So that a believer, let him desire as much as he will, he shall have his desires satisfied, Psal. xvii. 15. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I am awake with thy likeness.* The longing soul shall not miss of being filled with wisdom in Christ, with redemption in Christ, with sanctification, with salvation: Let the soul crave for holiness, there is enough in Christ to fill it; let it crave for love, there is enough in Christ; let it crave for peace and joy, there is enough in Christ to fill it; Christ being such an inexhaustible fountain, is still flowing into the soul to give it daily satisfaction:

The soul may weary in other things, and not be the better. Believers, that can but experience the least true longings after Jesus Christ, tho' with a weak faith, need not doubt but they have true faith, and shall not miss of a true and full satisfaction.

A weak faith shews itself by this grace of God, namely, an unfeigned desire, not only of salvation, for that the wicked and graceless man may have; but of reconciliation with God in Christ: This is a sure sign of faith to every touched and humble heart, and it is peculiar to the elect. - What a mercy and blessing it is to have the least true desires after Jesus Christ, since such souls are assured in God's word, that their longing souls shall be satisfied. Saith holy Bernard, "He that thirsts, let him thirst more, and he that desires let him Perkins on the Creed. desire more abundantly; because so much as he can desire, so much he shall receive.

Persons will be weary of their pleasures, weary of their treasures, and weary of their duties: That soul which hath made Christ his rest hath the truest satisfaction; when a soul comes to know Christ, it may say with the Psalmist, Psal. cxvi. *Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* What rest hath the soul? There is a great many restless enemies; there is Satan pursuing, the law condemning, guilt pursuing, the poor soul hath no safe refuge to flee unto but the Lord Jesus. The soul that hath Christ his life, can say, The Lord Jesus Christ hath purchased eter-

nal salvation for me; he became a curse for me, and redeemed me from the curse of the law; and let Satan and conscience say what they will, Jesus Christ hath paid my debts, satisfied justice, given me rest to my soul. Take up thou thy quiet rest in him, O my soul, for whatever the law saith, it speaks to them that are under the law: But I am redeemed by Christ, he is become my rock, and my salvation; my soul return thou to thy rest. Gal. iii. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: For it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* Be sure you do all, or you do nothing; there was never a man since the fall of Adam, that could do all things, nor the least thing as he ought. But Christ fulfilled the law, and hath delivered us from the curse of the law; for the just shall live by faith in Christ. Till a soul comes to center in Christ, the soul can never have rest and quiet; indeed you may forget the day of your death; if you are wrapt up in carnal securities, that is not rest, the soul will be molested again, when conscience is awakened, to consider what the state of the soul is. But if the law and sin accuses, the soul that can truly experience the Lord Jesus Christ is his life, hath redeemed him from the curse of the law, hath died, and risen for him, and is at God's right hand interceding with divine justice, and hath paid the whole price and ransom; the law condemns them that are under the law,

but Christ hath delivered a believer from all its accusations; *who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* What Christ hath done, is a believer's own; he is righteousness to every one that truly applies to him. My friends, till you know there is satisfaction made to the justice of God, you can never take up your rest, do as much as you can, until you come to center in his glorious redemption, that Christ hath purchased; to see him sanctification and redemption; that he hath satisfied for you, that you live on him for all; then the soul can take up his quiet rest. But till it is thus, do as much as you will, there is something wanting still: Not a word of peace to be had from God, but in and through Christ. Do as much as you will in a way of duty, without Christ, you cannot have rest and quiet. If you have been a praying person this ten, twenty or thirty years, this will all be swallowed up in this one thing, God is not satisfied, the guilt of sin follows me, my conscience accuses; saith Luther, "I am not able to endure my conscience, neither am I quieted by my own works, or by the righteousness of God's laws; much less have I any comfort by my sanctity, which out of my own devotion and good opinion I make choice of; yea, the devil, through my sin, so hunteth me in such sort, that I think the world is too narrow for me; only the acknowledgment of Christ lifteth me up, and setteth my conscience in peace."

Therefore I look not what I am in myself, but what Christ hath done; he hath bore the curse, therefore I shall never bear it. God hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, therefore my soul return thou to thy rest. All the debt is discharged, now my soul can live a quiet life in Christ. O what a soul-satisfying life it is, to live Christ! and till then there will be a complaining; when you have done all that you can do, when you have done the best you can, you want a righteousness to stand before God. The soul in Christ is cloathed with a garment sufficient for to cover its nakedness. Here is a righteousness as broad and long as the wounds and nakedness of the soul; and that your own duties can never be. If a man could stand bemoaning his sins from morning till night, there would be something in that that he would need a pardon for; but now *Christ was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21.* Made sin, not only said to be so, but made so; sin imputed to him; and while our sins lay on him, he was an imputed sinner, bearing our sins. The wrath of God was poured on him, he bore the fault, and God laid our sins on him, that we might be the righteousness of God in him. His righteousness is made our personal righteousness, as if we had performed all things ourselves; we are made the righteousness of God; not thought to be so, or seem to be so, but really made so; here is a covering to cover all our nakedness. Isaiah saith,

“Our righteousness is a bed too short for us to stretch ourselves upon, and a covering too narrow for us to wrap ourselves in;” if a man hath a garment of silk or silver, and if it be not long enough to cover him, there is a cause of shame; so if you have the bravest duties and expressions, carriage and outward behaviour in religion, without you are wrapt up in this righteousness, there is still something wanting, that will cause shame and confusion to all eternity; “He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” A believing soul ought to talk with our Saviour in this manner, I am thy sins, thou art my righteousness, therefore I am joyful, and boldly do triumph for my sins, not overballancing thy righteousness, neither let thy righteousness suffer me to be or remain a sinner; blessed for evermore, and praised be thy name, sweet Jesus. It is a glorious expression, a high expression, a comfortable expression, and truly a great mystery; that the innocent lamb of God, that knew no sin should be made sin for us, and we made the righteousness of God in him, Col. ii. We are complete in him, complete in Christ, tho’ not complete in sanctification, yet complete in the sight of God and justification; he doth present you without spot or wrinkle before God. In the best of men the best performances leaves a sense of guilt upon their souls; there is something wanting; but in Christ there is complete righteousness, complete wisdom, complete redemption, complete

beauty, complete glory, every thing complete that the soul is complete in him.

Seventhly, To live Christ is a happy life, because it is a safe life ; you are never safe till you are in Christ, and, there is no safety any where else ; you that are in Christ, O look back, first, what not long since you were ; secondly, what now you are ; thirdly, what you shall be, and you will see cause of admiration. When you were out of Christ, what a dangerous state were you in, under the wrath of God, the curse of the law ! Consider, where was I when I knew not Christ ? Where was I going ? I was going to destruction and did not know it : Was I so near the brink of the pit and did not mind ? Was I so near sinking and did not cry out ? O how can I but admire and adore this God that hath done this for me ! He hath brought me nigh by the blood of the covenant ; he hath brought me to a safe condition ; you were a-far off, but now are brought nigh by the blood of the covenant ; ye were without Christ, without the covenant, Ephes. ii. 13.

Thirdly, Consider what ere long you shall be ; you that are in Christ shall ere long be with Christ, you shall be safely arrived in glory ; O the danger that a soul out of Christ is in ! You are under the sword of divine justice, and how soon it may drop down on your head, drop down on your heart, you do not know ; therefore you are never safe till you are in Christ, that is a safe life, Prov. i. 33. *But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely and shall be qui-*

et from fear of evil. Whoso hearkens so as to believe, accept and lay hold on, and close with Christ, they shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil, the fear of evil shall not hurt you, Prov. iii. 18. speaking of wisdom, *she is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her.* There is in Christ safety, there is first the life of justification, secondly of sanctification, and thirdly of glorification.

First, A life of justification, a tree of life to free from condemnation, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ,* Rom. viii. 1. You are safe from the condemnation of the law, justice, conscience and condemnation of the world: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* There is life laid up in Christ, life for poor dead sinners, life for poor condemned sinners that lay hold on this tree of life; there is no condemnation to them more; there shall be no following them, as it was with Joab to the altar to slay him there. Lay hold on the tree of life and you are safe for ever: You may say of the thunderings of the law, I am safe from them all, the tree of life stands ready to give you the life of righteousness and justification that you may be free from condemnation; there is no condemnation: What a safe case is a soul in, that is in Christ? let a soul be condemned never so much, nothing shall hurt him, God hath justified him in, through, and for Christ's sake; tho' the devil come and accuse, and saith this man is clothed with filthy gar-

ments, this tree of life stands ready, Zech. iii. 1, 2. Satan comes and accuses Joshua, he was clothed with filthy garments. Thou art a holy God, a God of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with approbation: But here is one come with filthy garments, here is a sinful man come; he comes to offer up sacrifice for the people, but he is sinful; the devil comes and accuses him and condemns him. Now while there is any thing to condemn a man he is not safe; the devil comes and lays to his charge that he is clothed in filthy garments, but he comes not in love to holiness, but in envy to Joshua, in envy to the saints, in envy to God, and in envy to his free-grace; but the Lord Jesus Christ said to Satan, the Lord rebuke thee. Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire? I have chosen him, he is an elect vessel, I have redeemed him, I have clothed him with change of raiment, I have put a fair mitre on his head; Satan do thy worst and speak thy worst, thou canst not hurt Joshua. So this tree of life frees from condemnation, lay hold on Christ you are quit, let what bills there will come in against you; if a man should be tried for his life, and there comes in many bills of indictment against him, but he shews his pardon for all, then in vain do they come in; or if there be never so many items, all is forgiven; so let the devil come in with never so many items, and the law come in with never so many items, the Lord Jesus forgives them all to them that lay hold on him by faith.

Secondly, Then it is a life of sanctification:

Where sin reigned before, sin shall not have dominion over you; you are not under the law, but under grace; Then you may see that the law will not kill sin; the law will tell you, you are a sinner, but it will not kill your sin, Rom. xvi. 14. *For sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace.* Tho' sin may trouble you, it shall not have dominion over you; though it may grieve you, it shall not undo you. The serpent's seed is sentenced, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head.* Rom. viii. 3. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.* When a soul lays not hold on Christ, sin is in his nature, his lusts dogging of him, his lusts reigning and ruling over him; but through Christ he overcomes.

Thirdly, A life of glory. The apostle reckons the justified ones among the glorified ones. Whom he called, them he justified; and whom he justified, them he glorifies. He speaks in the present tense, as if it were already done, that they that lay hold of this tree of life, are as sure of eternal life, as if they were already in glory: So that it is a very safe life to live Christ, and to lay hold on her: But mark it still, this tree of life is too high for carnal reason to reach. This tree of life must drop fruit into your souls before you can reach up to that. We see fruitful trees are bending trees; trees that are loaded with fruit bow down, so that

even a child may lie on the ground and eat the fruit; so Jesus Christ taking our nature, humbled himself to the death of the cross; he condescended so low, to have union with us poor sinners, that a poor soul cannot go to Christ till Christ first come to him. Christ first comes to the soul, he bends down to the carnal heart, and possesses the soul of the life of faith, and then the soul can reach up to him. *Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* But how shall I come, Lord? may a poor sinner say. Says Christ, *No man can come unto me except the Father draw him.* I must first come by my Spirit to the sinner, before he can come to me by faith. But faith a poor soul, I cannot lay hold of Christ, I cannot believe, nor I cannot make Christ my life, I am a poor undone sinner; but if Christ comes to you, and takes you by the arm, as he did Ephraim, Hos. xi. 3. cannot you go along with him? If he comes and gives you an hand of faith, and takes hold of you, can you not follow him? This fruitful tree of life bends down with his fruit, that sinners may lay hold on him. If the husbandman expects to have corn, he must sow it; if a man would have a fine garden, he must plant it, for the ground naturally brings forth nothing but briers and thorns. The ground was cursed when Adam had sinned, and every heart is cursed, and all the sinner can bring forth by nature is cursed fruit; there may be something like grace, something like faith, but no true saving faith; as there may be field-

herbs like garden-herbs, and many other things alike, that are not the same; natural gifts, may shew like grace: But by natural reason there is never a man nor woman, (do the most they can) that can lay hold of Christ, till Christ comes and lays hold of them. There is nothing in our hearts but briars and thorns, we cannot believe; but when Christ comes, and works faith in our hearts, then we lay hold on Christ, then we are safe for ever. When you are got into Christ, all storms whatsoever cannot hurt you, you are safe. So the Lord Jesus speaks, Prov. viii. 35. *For whosoever findeth me findeth life.* Whoever is a stranger to Christ, is under the power of death, the sentence of death and condemnation; but *whoever findeth me findeth life.* What then? They shall obtain favour of the Lord. In the favour of a king or great man they say is safety; but that is not true always, nor very often; but they are certainly for ever safe, that enjoy the favour of God. You must find Christ before you know the favour of God; God's favour is manifest in Christ; when he shews kindness it is in Christ; whosoever finds Christ shall have God's favour, Psal. lxviii. 18. *He hath received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that God may dwell among them.* If you would have the favour of God, seek after Christ; in this temple the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, and when you come to live in Christ, God lives in you, he comes and takes up his abode with you; *Thou hast ascended up on high,*

thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men. What men? The rebellious. What encouragement is here for the rebellious sinners to come to Christ? O sinner, come; Christ hath received gifts for you: To what end? That God may dwell among you. Christ hath received enough to make you lovely in the sight of the Father for ever. How should saints also be encouraged by this, under all their infirmities and troubles? If you had all the comforts of a present life, and had not the favour of God, you would be undone for ever. He that finds Christ, finds life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord; God will dwell among such. As Christ by death made way for the soul to come to God, so by the revelation of his grace, a soul comes to taste of the love of God. When a soul comes to know Christ, then the favour of God shines on him; and is not this a safe life? O Christless soul, that lives, but not in Christ; that knows many things but not Christ; that performs duties but not by faith in Christ; you are never safe, you do not know how soon your slaughter-day will come, and it will be eternal. You that have not Christ for your sacrifice, your souls must be a sacrifice in hell for ever: But you that live Christ, live an happy life, for it is a safe life. As Abigail spake to David when she met him, the greatest comfort that she brought to him, was, That his life should be bound up in the life of his Lord, 1 Sam. xxv. 28, 29. *I pray thee forgive the trespass of thine handmaid, for the Lord will certainly make my*

lord a sure house: Because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days, yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul. Saith she, Here is a mighty man risen to pursue thy life; but though he is risen up against thee, thou shalt be sure to be safe. Why? What is the reason? "The soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God." Whatever pursues a soul in Christ shall never hurt him. All temptations, and troubles, and accusations that pursue the soul shall not hurt it. Saith she, A man is risen to pursue thy life, but however the soul of my lord is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God. Friends, you are never safe, till your souls are bound up in the bundle of life with Christ, till you come to take Christ, lay hold on him as your own, you are never safe, you have pursuers. *A man is risen up to pursue the life of my lord:* But one poor Christian is pursued with temptation, another with strong corruption, another with strong fears and terrors, another with great desertion; but Christians, never fear, your life is bound up in the bundle of life; the life of righteousness, the life of grace, the life of comfort, the life of glory. The soul that believes in Christ is so bound up in him, that the devil cannot reach him, temptation cannot harm him, sin cannot undo him, trouble cannot overcome him. O what a life is a believer's life! I am not speaking of a professors life only; not one that performs duty, but one that lives on Christ.

For me to live is Christ. O it is the safest of lives! Whatever you have done you will never be safe; whatever you have professed, you will never be safe till you are bound up with Christ. There is nothing you can do in outward duty, but the devil will have more to say against you, than you have to say for yourselves. There is no fear, O saint, whatever comes against thee, if thou art in Christ. Therefore consider it, every one of you, as you would appear at the great day, and your faces not be ashamed, pray see that Christ be yours, pray see that you can produce the seals and witness of the Spirit of God that you are believers, or all your profession will leave you miserable. To live Christ is a safe life, John xiv. 19. saith Christ, *Because of him you shall live also.* He lives, and you shall live; he is in glory, and you shall be in glory; he is on the throne, and you shall be on the throne; he is beloved of the Father, and you are beloved of the Father. Believing in Christ is a safe way, no way safe but by believing in Christ. There is a poor Christian in troubles and trials, but he is happy, his life is bound up in his Lord's life, which is the life of lives. When Jacob was in his journey to Padan Aram, when he came to lie down at night, he had but an hard pillow. Indeed many times it is hardest with the outward man, when it is best with the inward man: He had a stone for his pillow, but a cordial for his soul. A ladder that reached from heaven to earth.

This ladder hath six glorious rounds, that

make a believer to ascend up to the enjoyment of God, his birth, his life, and doctrine, his death and resurrection, his ascension and intercession. Christ is that ladder that reacheth from heaven to earth; the saint's salvation is begun, carried on, and finished in and through and by him; he is the author and finisher of our faith, we are elected in him, Eph. i. 1. Christ is *Principium & Caput Electionis*, he is the first elect, in whom, and for whom all other are elected. God elected Christ to be head of the body, all the members chosen in him, he is made all to the believing soul, from first to last, he is made of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30.

It was a figurative discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose deity and humanity was set forth by this ladder.

This ladder may be considered, either 1. Literally, and so it is represented to Jacob, the providence of God, who tho' he dwells in heaven extends his care and government to the earth, and particularly makes use of the angels, as ministring spirits for the good of his people; and these angels do not appear idle or standing still, but always in motion, either ascending to God, to receive his commands; or descending to earth for the execution of them; which was a most seasonable vision for Jacob in his sad and sorrowful condition, that though he was forsaken and persecuted by men, and forced to flee away secretly for fear of his life, yet he nei-

ther was nor should be neglected or forsaken of God in his whole journey. Or mystically, and so it represents Jesus Christ, by whom heaven and earth are united, who is called the way to heaven, which this ladder was, who as the head of angels, is perpetually sending them forth either to God, or from God, to minister to the heirs of salvation. Mr. Pool's Annotations.

“And he dreamed a dream, and behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached up to heaven, and behold the angels of God ascending and defending,” Gen. xxviii. 11. “And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night.” It is best tarrying, though night, when Christ is present; “because the sun was set.” When outward comforts go down, and Christ arises, it is a blessed change. “And he took of the stones of the place, and put them for his pillows.” It is a blessed lodging where Christ is. “And lay down in that place to sleep.” Well may a soul sleep quiet, when Christ is present with him. “And he dreamed a dream, and behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven.” This must be Jesus Christ figuratively.

For *First*, His protection was ready, though this was but a dream: God did visit his people in dreams of old, before Christ was manifest in the flesh. Jesus Christ, whose humanity was set forth, who humbled himself to the death of the cross, he came from heaven to earth, he was truly God, truly man. “And

behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Still there are always ministering spirits about the heirs of salvation, still they keep the rounds of the ladder; they are ready to serve God, if they are sent a thousand miles, yea, millions of miles, to minister to the saints, shewing still only, that a soul in Christ hath a protector, and guardian angels to attend upon him, he hath the chariots of God to accompany him, Psal. lxxviii. 17. O believer, what are you Christs? And have you so many angels waiting on you daily? Where is your thankfulness, where is your heart-love to God? Psal. xxxiv. *The angel of the Lord encamps round about those that fear him.* Have you angels waiting and attending on you? Angels ascending and descending for your good? You are in a safe condition. Believing souls, have you not found this ladder many times when you have been in trouble and under desertion; have you not found your hearts hard, your comforts dead, your souls cast down; have not you found Jesus Christ the ladder, by which you have ascended up to the Father? Hath he not brought you out of that wilderness condition?

Whosoever thou art that fearest the Lord, be of good courage, take thou no care, neither be faint-hearted, nor make any doubt of the angels walking, watching and protection, for most certainly they are about, and by thee, and do carry thee upon their hands. But how, or in what manner? Take thou no care. God

saith it, therefore it must be sure and certain. Luther.

Although now a-days they appear not visibly, nor afford such outward help, yet are these heavenly messengers employed for the safeguard and benefit of the saints. As embroidered cherubims invironed the tabernacle, so do those heavenly soldiers guard God's true tabernacle, the church. Ainsworth.

Cant. iii. 6. "Who is this that comes out of the wilderness?" Who is this? From whence doth she come? From the wilderness; a wilderness of trials, temptations and desertions; she turns her back on them, and her face on Christ. And how doth she come? She ascends like pillars of smoke. What incense hath she? She hath perfumed incense, myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant, with the sweet savour of Christ, with the righteousness of Christ: It ascends, being drawn up by the Spirit of God; it is perfumed, having Christs righteousness. No powder of the merchant can be sweeter than the prayers of a saint to God in Christ; but they would not ascend, if it were not for the Spirit of God. While persons employ their gifts and parts out of Christ, they descend; though they do perform duty in the exactest manner, yet there is evil enough in them for God to abhor it; they are as smoak in the nostrils of a pure God: but when they are perfumed by Jesus Christ, they are a sweet savour. Therefore be not afraid of those weak prayers, smoaky prayers, they are

perfumed with Christs righteousness. It may be the poor soul complains, I have been at prayer, but I have prayed with such wanderings, and such deadness, and such coldness, that I fear God will abhor me: but soul, hast thou breathed after Christ in them? Then soul, they are perfumed, they will be accepted in Christ: therefore by faith in Christ your prayers are safe. O blessed be God for Jesus Christ, blessed be God for the perfume, and blessed be God for this ascending; for you never would have ascended, if it were not for the Spirit of God; nor have your prayers perfumed, were it not for the sweet odour of Christ's righteousness. There are two things a carnal heart is ready to do; if they do a duty to their mind, then they are apt to be proud of it, and rest on it; and if they do not do it to their mind, then they are cast down and complain, I cannot pray, I cannot profit by hearing, God hath forgotten me.

The humble, godly, believing soul, that makes Christ his life, he can truly say, Though I am poor in myself, yet I am rich in Christ; I am indifferent and cold in prayer, but Christ is my offering and altar, and therefore in him I put up all to God. Therefore you see how safe a soul is that is in Christ.

First, Your souls are safe, none can rob you of them; go where you will, your souls are safe in the hands of Christ; you that live Christ, know Christ, believe in Christ, lay hold on Christ, your souls are safe indeed, he will keep

you: Saith the Apostle, 2 Tim. i. 12. What I have committed to him, he will keep; my all I have left with him; he that hath bought me, that hath paid the price, I have committed all to him: As you know, if a man hath purchased a rich jewel, and leaves it in the hand of a trusty friend; saith he, I have left it with one that is an able man; but is he faithful? Yes, he is a very honest man. O how much more may we speak of Christ? Hast thou committed thy soul to Christ? Why? Because he is able to pay whatever justice can demand: He hath paid it all: Whatever troubles or trials I go through, Christ can bare me up. But is Christ faithful? He is a faithful high priest, saith Paul, I have committed my all to him. You do not know what you loose by not committing yourselves to Christ: We commit ourselves to ourselves, and that is our great loss. If you believe Christ to be faithful, commit your souls to him, it is safe to leave your all with Christ.

Sometimes a man will not leave the worth of six-pence in another man's hand; Why? Because he is in debt, and so he thinks it is not safe. Christ is not in debt, he hath paid all that God hath demanded, therefore do you commit your souls to him; the Apostle had committed his all to him; and truly Paul had learned very much of the knowledge of Christ: "For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed." Many times a person says, I am ashamed, I was such a fool to be-

lieve such a person. Many times you trust to your own heart; aye, the more fool you. Many times you say, I trust to my own duties; aye, the more fool you: But I have committed my all to Christ: Why? Because I know him, I have left all with him, and I am persuaded when I meet the great God, I shall not be a farthing in debt, for Christ hath paid all, I am persuaded my comforts will be sure; I am persuaded my hopes, my faith, my soul, my body, my treasure, are all safe; when the poor hypocrite will be ashamed, when the carnal professor will be ashamed. Whatever denomination believers go under by a reproaching world, let them do all they can, you that have committed your souls to Christ shall not be ashamed. "Nevertheless I am not ashamed," saith the apostle, "for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Look to that day, that great day of accounts is coming, that day that you must meet God at the judgment-seat. If Christ doth not then present his satisfaction for you to God, you must lie by it to all eternity: but if you are in Christ, your souls are safe. Paul was as sure of glory, as if he were in heaven; he was as certain of a crown of righteousness, as if possessed of it, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforward there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me*

only, but unto them also that love his appearing. Friends, look to your crown, look to your souls, look to your glory, aye and that you may secure them; look that you lay hold on Christ. Methinks to consider how many millions of souls will stand at the great day strangers to Christ, that have made a great profession of religion, but have rested upon their own duties for salvation, should awaken us to throw ourselves upon Christ alone in all we do for acceptance before God. Do as many duties as can be performed, if Christ be not yours at that day, you will be confounded; but if Christ is yours, your souls are safe.

But, Christians, are your souls in the hands of Christ? Bought with the blood of Christ? Have you committed your souls to Christ? Do you live on him? Psal. xxxvii. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass;* he will never fail them that commit themselves unto him, Heb. xiii. 8. *Yesterday and to-day the same for ever.* If the world be turned upside down, he is the same for ever.

Secondly, The soul that lives Christ, his soul is safe, none can rob him of his comforts.

First, Afflictions shall not rob you of your comforts. Truly I tell you, friends, there are many, we hope they are believers, but for want of a real denomination of faith in Christ, and living on Christ, they are afraid in every trouble, that God is coming to destroy them. But if Christ is your life, who can destroy you?

Mat. x. 28. *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.* What hurt can all affliction do, when God is your God? There is not one affliction comes but it is in love. You may write love upon all your bitter potions, they are all safe, you have them from a kind and tender physician that understands his practice, and loves his patients. If it is a bitter potion, yet love and care may be writ upon all. Many are apt to cry, God is against me, he is destroying me, he hath found me out; but when Christ is become your life, it is all in love from God. If a child be running in a pleasant way, to the river's side, where many children have been drowned, and one pulls this child away, O let me go this pleasant way; but the person or parent that pulls it away, knows the danger that the child doth not, therefore he plucks it away, tho' against the child's will. So many times, when a saint cries out, God is dealing with me in anger, when God is dealing with him in love; and tho' it is a green and pleasant way, the Lord prevents you by afflictions from the evil that otherwise you would fall into. "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him." It may be you will say, do any despise the Lord? Yes, when you murmur. Truly God might have prevented this affliction, I cannot bear it, I should have done well enough,

had not these troubles come upon me. But God is not wroth with a believer, the flame of his justice hath taken hold of Christ. The physician does not intend any hurt in a bitter potion. Christ hath paid dear for your afflictions, that they might be sanctified, Heb. xi. 6. *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But while a soul is out of Christ, every pressure is a lash of divine justice: But a soul in Christ may say, by his stripes am I healed, my iniquities are laid upon him, God hath nothing against me, Christ hath paid all for me.

When God calls his children aside, and corrects them, they may say, I will go to my Father, and hear what he speaks; for Christ hath bought all, and whatever the cup is, tho' bitter, I will drink it up; though a cup of affliction it is blest. But souls out of Christ, every thing robs them of their comfort; while they can do any thing, and prosper in the world they go on bravely; but let God touch them, and they are filled with amazement. But take saints, whose God is their God, Christ their life, they can go on comfortably. Lord, whatever bitter potion I have, it is in love. That God in anger chastises his saints, is impossible, for Christ hath borne the wrath of God, and hath satisfied divine justice, that God hath not one drop to pour out upon you that are Christs. Your afflictions are to keep you from sin, to

subdue sin, to sanctify your course of life, that you may be weaned from the world, and live to God. Many persons bring a false charge against the saints of God in their afflictions, as Job's friends did against him: You will say to the godly, when they are afflicted, The hand of God is against you, the curse of God is upon you, the devil and corrupt hearts are very apt to make bad constructions of God's dealings, and to close in with such conjectures. If Christ hath not paid all, there is something for you to pay; but if you are Christ's, Christ hath paid all; therefore afflictions cannot rob you of your comfort.

Secondly, Justice cannot rob you. The justice of God is satisfied, you may look divine justice in the face boldly. There are two men that walk very fearfully, the man that borrows what he hath, and the other that steals what he hath. The one is afraid of an arrest, the other of hanging. So it is with poor sinners; the ungodly man that calls not upon God at all, steals all, for he never asks God's leave; he steals the mercies of God without asking God's leave whether he shall have them or no. There is another, that is the professor that knows not Christ; he indeed will ask God for mercies, and doth perform duties; he will pray, he will give thanks, and he will fast, and, in his own conceit, do whatever God requires, but he rests here; but notwithstanding all this, justice is not satisfied. It is your duty to give thanks for mercies, and your duty to pray,

and your duty to fast. But do you think your duties are payment to God for what you receive? And do you think, because you perform duty, you satisfy God? No, there will come a day of reckoning, and you must lie in prison till you have paid the last mite, if your mercies are not bought with Christ's blood; but if Jesus Christ is become your life, then all is paid; for you have all your mercies in a way of redemption. So the Psalmist, Psal. cvii. 1. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* Will giving thanks entitle to these mercies? No, let the redeemed of the Lord say so: You that are Christ's, all God's mercies are yours, made over to you, every mercy is bought and paid for. But an unbeliever, every comfort he hath he must pay dear for, his mercies and talents are but borrowed; but all the mercies you have that are in Christ, are bought with the blood of Christ. What you have is your own in Christ Jesus, therefore none can take it from you.

Thirdly, Satan cannot rob you of your comfort, if you are in Christ; he may cast floods after you, but he cannot rob you; he may wash you, but shall not drown you. "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." You are not built on this rock, that have not Christ to be your's, do what you will; but taking hold on Christ, you are built on a rock, Matth. xvi. "and I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter,

and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her." Christ is not only a rock to uphold you, but he is life to keep you, that all the floods that the devil casts after you shall not drown you; Satan's temptations may come, and may try you; the saint may see a great cloud arising, but it shall not drown him. David complains, *That deep calleth unto deep, and that the waves and billows were gone over him.* Though there may be great waves, great trials, great temptations, they shall not overcome you. I tell you, the devil shall never drown you that are in Christ; the ship may be tossed, the poor saint may cry out, *Lord, save, or we perish*; but if Christ is in the ship, no fear, if Christ is your's; if you are tossed with temptations, and perplexed with great troubles; all the devil can do against you, shall but stir you up to awaken Christ, though he intends the undoing of your souls. Have you temptation or wanderings in prayer? Does it not make you to cry to Christ more vehemently, to run to Christ more constantly, to rely on Christ more heartily? The devil's temptations do but wash away your filth, you are kept still upon the rock, you shall not be drowned: The loving kindnesses of the Lord are still the same to you; the devil robs most of the world, he robs them of their time, of their souls and comforts, and they will certainly be undone: But now though Satan does trouble you with temptations and corruptions,

you that are believers, he shall not rob you of your comfort, because you live on Christ.

Fourthly, Death shall not rob you of your comfort. If Christ is your's, death in and through Christ is conquered. If a lion or bear did lie dead in the street, every little boy would be ready to stand on them, and make nothing of them; but if they were alive, they would be afraid of them, and not dare to come near them; So death being conquered by Christ, the sting being taken away, the weakest believer in Christ may insult over death. Death comes peaceably to tell you, God would have you come to your mansions of glory. But a carnal man out of Christ, death undoes him; he may cry out, I am undone, lost and damned for ever; I shall never breathe on earth more, I shall never hear a sermon, I shall never have an offer of Christ more, I am going to everlasting destruction: But to a believer the sting is taken out. Sin was the instrument that brought death into the world, and the death of Christ is the death of sin. A believer, when he dies, may say, I shall change my life for a better, it doth not rob him of his joy; *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* When Christ, who is your life, shall appear, you shall also appear with him; I am going to live a better life, I am going to live with him that I live to. Death is conquered to a believer, it cannot rob you.

First, It cannot rob you of your joy, for you are going to a better life. A believer may say, I am going where I shall never grieve God.

more, where I shall never cry more. Why hidest thou thy face? I am going to that Christ I live to; my very heart longs for him, whose presence I shall ere long enjoy: You are but going out of the lower room into the upper; you are but going from the church militant below, to the church triumphant above; you are going up to him that came down to you: That life is safest that death cannot rob us of. O what a lamentable out-cry will there be with many at their death! There would be more out-cries with sinners, than there are when death comes, but that the devil stupifies them, that they do not cry out till they are in hell: But if men were set on the brink of hell, and could see the misery they are going to, Christ not being theirs, O what a dreadful out-cry would there be! But now a soul in Christ may challenge death, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* O death, what hast thou against me? Christ hath took away thy sting. O you that have Christ your life, how sweet should every sermon be? How sweet should every Sabbath be? How sweet should every word be? We think your souls should be bound up in love, grace, glory, and the comforts and blessings of the covenant of grace; and when death approaches, you should think of Christ's sweet words to you, *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* O what a joyful day will the day of death be to a believer!

Secondly, Death cannot take away the comfort of a believer's company. We are sorry to

leave our relations, our friends, and company that we delight in here ; but never was your heart so taken up with delight in the saints, in the best frame that ever you were in, to the thousandth part, to what you will be in glory : But the wicked will be robbed of the comfort of their company ; they will then curse the day that ever they saw each others face ; but the saints will meet all the glorious saints, patriarchs and prophets : God is your's, Christ is your's, and you will come to a glorious assembly ; the company that you delighted in on earth, you will come to after death, Heb. xii. 22, 23. *But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem ; and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect.* What a glorious company are these ! O how many glorious suns will you see in one day ? the very first moment you enter into glory, what a glorious sight will you see ! O how will you admire that blessed face that was spit on for you ! O how will you admire those blessed wounds in his arms, legs, side and heart, that was made for your healing ! Satan cannot rob you of your company ; you loved the people of God on earth, and you are going to them. So the apostle comforts the Thessalonians, that at the death of their relations they should not complain, 1 Thes. iv. 13, 14. " But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren,

concerning them which are asleep, that they sorrow not even as others that have no hope ; for if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him." Do not you fear, death shall not rob you of your company, Christ will bring them with him. "For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord." Death cannot rob you of your glorious company, the glorious saints that are gone to heaven before, and they that remain behind. You shall never lose one friend by death.

Thirdly, Death cannot rob the believer of his life, for his life is hid with Christ ; when death comes they do but sleep ; that immortal soul that God breathed into the body that is now living, that goes immediately into immortal glory. Death does but enlarge it, and set it in that place where it will never be confined to a sinful body : The saints will never cry out with David, Psal. cii. 2. *Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble :* But the time will then come that all his fetters will be knocked off, and he will then indeed come to know that life he hath long wished for : So that death cannot rob them of their life ; they do but fetch a nap in the grave, till Christ comes and call for them. If we would live for ever, let us live Christ now ; If we would not have death kill us, let us kill sin now, Rom. vi. 23. *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* So that there

is eternal life laid up in Christ. Dying, it is but a going out of your dark chambers here below, to that glory above, where you will have no need of a candle, or the sun; for God and the Lamb are the light of that place; there the saints shall never cry out, O my heart, or O my head, but shall be taken up in the arms of the Lord of glory. When Christ appears, who is our life, what then? we shall appear with him in glory, Col. iii. 3, 4. *For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God: When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.* The saints, if they consider, need not be so afraid at the approaching of death, for it will be the real happiness of their souls; for then you shall enjoy that perfect communion and blessedness that you long for here on this side the grave. We are willing to have rest, but are loath to go to bed; we are willing to be released of our sins and troubles, but we are unwilling to die, and we shall never be wholly freed from them till then. How lingering are we, as if our desires were, that Christ's chariot-wheels should stay a little longer! But sure were the joy of this glorious life more cleared up to us, we should long to put off our mortality, and to put on immortality, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 3, 4. You that have Christ for your life are very safe, death shall rob you of nothing; for the apostle saith, *For him to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Death does but take away that clod that we carry about us, that we may see the Sun of Righteousness more

glorious, and enjoy him more perfectly in immortal life and glory. Death robs most, but shall not rob the believer; you shall but make an exchange of heaven for earth, glory for your shame, joy for sorrow; for your crying and weeping here, praise and hallelujahs above.

Fourthly, Death shall not rob you of your treasure. Indeed the damned live, but it is a miserable life, living death in everlasting chains. When death comes, the treasure of the saint is perfectly enjoyed: What they had an earnest of before, now they have in possession: now they shall put on the glorious robe, and the royal crown on their heads; they shall put on the crown of glory and of righteousness; *Henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.* O what a laying up is here! When the apostle was ready to be offered up, saith he, I am ready to be offered up, but I shall lose nothing by it, for I cannot have my crown till I die, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all that love his appearing." I am ready to go, I do not repent my going, I know very well the time of my departure is at hand: But what then? Tho' it be, "I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith," I have lived Christ, I have made him the hope of my life, and now I shall receive my crown: I have been in troubles and trials, and in my Lord's

battles, but now I am going to receive a crown of righteousness: Why so? Had Paul deserved it by his works? No, but as God is a righteous God, and had promised, "Henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day;" I shall have it, when I am offered up, when I am put to death, and then shall I wear a crown, an immortal crown on my head for ever; and this is not only for me, but for all that love his appearing; they must needs love his appearing that have him for their life. O the glorious crowns that the saints shall be crowned with at that day! a crown of life that never withers. Here our comforts wither while we hold them in our hand; they wither like a beautiful flower; in the morning it holds up its head, but by evening it is withered. A crown of glory that never fades away. O what treasures will the saints have when death comes, that have made Christ their life! The worldling will lose his treasure, the hypocrite will lose his hope, he will never hope more, Job xxvii. 8. "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" Though he hath gained applause of men, he shall lose it, Dan. xii. 3. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." What is the hope of a hypocrite, of a Christless soul, when he hath breathed his last, when his soul sits quivering on his lips? Alas!

I have made a profession of religion, I thought I had something laid up, but all is lost for ever. O that I should hope in vain, now the end of my hope is come, and not in salvation but damnation of my soul! Though I have done many things, and made a bustle in the world, and eat and drank in Christ's presence, it is all in vain that I have hoped, my strength and my hope is perished for ever; and then all his peace is lost; no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. Then the storm of divine vengeance will come and awaken the false hope of the hypocrite; then the worlding will lose all his riches. The young man was sorrowful to leave all and follow Christ. Persons are afraid to do any thing for religion, for fear of wanting. But whether the young man will part with all to follow Christ or no, he must leave all at death; death doth spoil them of all their treasure: But it is not so with the saint. The poor Christless soul may say, when he considers his state, Whatever I have, ere long it will be taken from me; if I have treasured up the world's goods, and have not made Christ my life, I am like forever to be undone; to use this world to God's glory, will be our mercy; but to over-love it, it will be our undoing; but death to the saint will be the year of jubile, they shall have double for all their trials, troubles and sorrows; when death comes they shall have all restored to them; whatever they have lost for Christ, it will be gain then; they have laid up for them-

selves a good foundation for time to come, as the apostle speaks, 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the times to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.* A good foundation against the time to come; the saints have their treasure in store when they go hence, Matth. vi. 20. *Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.* In heaven there his heart was, there his hope was, there his desire was, there his longing was, and now he comes to die his treasure is safe for him; then a saint, while he lives, he need not fear death, he lives a certain life.

Secondly, He may live comfortably.

First, He may live certainly on comforts. I am Christ's, and I know nothing shall pluck me from Christ. I am persuaded: what are you persuaded of, Paul? "I am persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." May not some temptation, some corruption over-set you? No, saith he, they shall not, I shall be a conquerer through Christ, nothing shall se-

parate me from him ; I am persuaded death shall not ; If I live I live Christ, If I die I shall live with Christ. Nor angels ; good angels will not, if they would they should not ; nor bad angels shall not, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present ; buffeting, reproaches, scornings, imprisonment, sufferings ; what if you go through all this, and are not separate from Christ ? Yet is there not something to come ? Do you not fear death and judgment, that will be a terror to most of the sons and daughters of men. Whatever comes I still am Christ's, neither height nor depth shall separate me from Christ. Let mine iniquities reach up as high as heaven, the righteousness of Christ is still higher. Nor depth : it shall not swallow a believer up, he is held safe in the everlasting arms of infallible grace and mercy. What a certain life does a saint live, that is sure never to be separated from Christ ? things present cannot do it, nor things to come shall not. What a blessed life, an happy life, a safe life is this ! O poor Christless soul, how uncertain dost thou live ! You are not sure of abiding here one moment. The world is like an handful of sand running through your fingers, like the air that you breathe in, that you cannot hold a moment in your fist. But the believer hath a certainty, he can assure himself he shall never be poor and miserable, nor deprived of true happiness, but shall be safe forever in the hands of Christ : as for this world, it is uncertain ; how long we shall enjoy life, liberty, or any mercy we know

not. But the best counsel I can give you, is to get Christ, and then you will be safe: Things may have a good aspect one day, and another day as bad, but yet in Christ you are safe for ever, in life, in death, and to all eternity.— Here you are certain of nothing, favour of men, high or low, rich or poor, is unconstant; the wheel turns in a moment. But if you have Christ you have a certain life. O how comfortably may a saint live in all troubles and changes whatsoever, that hath Christ for his life. We use to say, It is an ill wind blows no body good. But I say, let the wind blow as ill as it will, it blows the saint always good; that the soul may say, Let what will come, I live well. We may compare a saint that is troubled for outward things, to a man that hath an orchard full of trees laden with fruit, but because the wind has blown off the leaves, sits down and weeps. If one should ask, what do you weep for? Why, my apple-tree leaves are gone. Why, you have apples, have you not? Yes; then what a foolish man are you to weep for a few leaves, that might hinder both sight and ripening of your fruit? The comforts of this world are but leaves; why do you weep for the leaves, while you have the fruit? Glorious promises, glorious peace, glorious pardon, riches of grace, hope of glory, and sit down to weep or be cast down for the loss of a few worldly comforts. And the truth of it is, so narrow are our spirits, so unbelieving are our hearts, that we many times weep for losses

here, as if we had no better portion. What, weeping while the boughs hang full of fruit? What, weep while your souls have the glorious promises, glorious peace, and glorious pardon, and a glorious Christ, and hopes of life eternal through him? Will you weep for a few outward losses and crosses, while your souls are filled with fruit? While your souls are as trees bringing forth twins? This is much to be lamented, that the saints do thus mourn for outward comforts; let the wind blow which way it will, it cannot take away your life: You may eat of the fruit of the tree of life in the midst of Paradise, that you may leave your drops below, and come to the full fountains above. If a man hath enough, he may afford to lose a little.—Saith the Psalmist, I have a goodly heritage, the Lord is my portion, Psal. xvi. 5, 6. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot; the lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place; yea, I have a goodly heritage.* While Christ is my life, my glory, my portion, I have a goodly portion; may be the winds may arise, storms of afflictions, storms of trouble, the Lord knows what may be; but make sure of Christ; let the wind blow off the leaves, it cannot take away the fruit. The church saith in Lam. iii. 24. *The Lord was her portion, she would hope in him.* Is it so, that a believer's life is bound up in Christ? There is a great deal of difference between a believer and another man at death; what are the thoughts

of a carnal man at death? What if they were known to the standers-by! My life is done, and my misery is come, O that I were to live in the world, and never die. But what is a believer's thought? O, saith he, that my heart may be settled on Christ, that I may know Christ to be my life, and God mine, I would bless his name for ever. There is a difference between a moral man and a believer: How is it? I have lived honestly, I have done no body any harm, God deal with me as I have done with others. Now a believer will discourse of things in another manner, I have nothing in myself, I am sin and sinful, but Christ is my life, therefore I desire not to stand in one of my good works in judgment, but wrap up myself wholly in Christ's righteousness. Come legal man, one under the law, O I would pray more, fast more, if I were to live longer. Thus he would do a great deal of work in a little time, not considering if he lives longer he carries the same heart about him. But a believer saith, If I am to live it shall be by faith. I would believe more, know Christ more, I would live upon Christ more, and when I die I would die in him, and be found in him at the great day.

3. *Infer.* Is it so that a believer's life is bound up in Christ? What boundless love was this in God to poor sinners, that he unbosoms himself to them, that he should give Christ to be their life! When they were carnal, wicked and sinful, that then Jesus Christ should be revealed unto them; that the Lord should bestow on

dead sinners such a precious life, who were by nature poor, dead, heavy lumps of hell? What infinite surpassing love is this, that should give such a life to raise up lumps of hell to heavenly glory! Christ clothed himself with human flesh and blood, that so he might become an infinite mass and boundless sea of visible speaking, breathing, weeping, bleeding, living, dying grace: All the glorified saints and angels are but living monuments, and ever living tenants of this free grace; this grace of Christ perfumeth heaven and earth: All the grace which God doth, or can put forth for the salvation of sinners, is laid up and exhibited by Christ; he has broad and strong shoulders, which can bear to heaven the most heavy lumps of hell. There is more force and omnipotence in Christ's infirmity and sufferings, than in all the strength and efficacy of men and angels. There is more life in Christ's death, more riches in his poverty, more victory in his hanging on the cross, than in all the world besides; yea, Christ's very sighs, tears, sweat, stripes, reproaches and faintings, have a sovereign efficacy in them for the procuring and conferring grace on his redeemed ones. Thence we receive of Christ's fulness, grace for grace. As the child receiveth from his parent limb for limb, member for member: as the sons of Adam receive all of his fulness, sin for sin, lust for lust, so Christ's regenerated ones receive of his fulness, grace for grace; there is not any grace in the heart of Christ, but his mem-

bers have an impartment and resemblance thereof. Now this infinite plenitude of grace in Christ, which renders him so glorious, proceeds originally from the election of God the Father; for all the treasures of grace are originally lodged in the sovereign good pleasure or heart of God the Father, who has ordained Christ as mediator, through whom all are to be conveyed to the elect. This ought greatly to be remarked or heeded by the friends of Christ, that albeit the divine essence and sovereign will of God be the original fountain of all grace, yet he has determined that not one drop of this grace shall be derived unto sinners, but thro' Christ a Mediator. This is the great mystery of the gospel, the great wonder of heaven and earth, that the blessed God, who is the fountain of all grace, should so far condescend to sinners, as to assume human nature, and to make it a receptacle and vehicle to convey all grace unto them.

Mr. Gale, on the
Saints Amity with
God in Christ.

4. *Infer.* Is Christ a believer's life, and such a life as hath been discoursed: How should believers be endeared to Jesus Christ? What a thriving, happy, blessed, glorious, surpassing life do believers live! It is natural to persons to love their lives more than all enjoyments. What cost and pains will persons be at to preserve their natural lives? but what are all the lives that have been since Adam to the end of the world, if compared with Christ, who is a believer's life? all their present and future bles-

sings are bound up in this life : What cause hath every believer to mourn, that they love Christ so little, that hath loved them so much ! His love to them passeth knowledge, the depths of it can never be fathomed. With what purpose of heart should every believer cleave to Christ ! Christ loved with his whole heart, as it doth appear by what he hath suffered for his redeemed ones. Methinks I should hear a believer say with Peter, " Lord, thou knowest I love thee." It is much to be lamented, Christ hath many professed friends, but few real lovers ; as a learned author saith, *Multi osculantur christum, pauci vero amant*, Many kiss Christ, but few love him. Many do as Orpah did to her mother Naomi, kiss and take their leave. And many with Judas, kiss and betray : But oh with what an hearty and fervent love should every believer love Christ !

5. *Infer.* Is Christ a believer's life ? Then what life should there be in a believer's love towards each other ! They that are bound up in the same bundle of life, should be bound up in a bundle of love. How can our love be hid from them, in whom we see the love of Christ appear ? How can those pretend to be made partakers of the life of Christ, that are strangers to the love of Christ ? Rivers of waters ran down David's eyes, because men kept not God's law. Have we not cause in our days to shed a flood of tears, that Christians break Christ's new commandment, who hath commanded his disciples to love one another. There are many

that pretend to be passed from death to life, but few there are that love the brethren. Are not many so bound up in their own opinion, as if their whole salvation lay therein, laying such weight and stress thereon, as if none could be saved, but who jump in with them in their opinion, while it may be all the while they are grossly mistaken? But if their form and way of worship be right, they mistake the mark, that rest there for salvation. How do such despise persons holier and sounder in the principles of religion than themselves; and while they profess themselves to be christians of the highest rank, they deny an article of our christian faith, that all that own themselves christians profess to believe, viz. *the communion of saints*, denying fellowship with them that have fellowship with the Father, and his Son Christ Jesus; such as are bound up in smaller things, as tithe of mint, annis and cummin, neglect the weightier matters, judgment, mercy, and faith; not but that it is good to be zealous for every truth of Christ; but not to let our zeal run out more in the form than the power of godliness, as the Pharisees of old did. Where love is wanting, the life and power of Godliness is absent from such persons. If love to the brethren is a mark of grace, I believe many that account themselves very good christians fail of that mark, except none are their brethren but those of their own opinion; then papists, and quakers, and all such persons that hold together in a cursed unity to uphold damnable he-

resies, may be said to love the brethren, as well as such ; for they love not for Christ's sake, nor as they bear the image of God, but for opinion's sake. They that love the brethren, that love such as have the Lord Jesus formed upon their hearts, will love every person that is sound in the faith, and holy in life, though he differ in judgment in some outward forms. Persons being great in their own eyes, makes them look so loftily upon their brethren, as Luther saith of himself, *Tantus eram sanctus ut purissimus fuerim omnes, si potuissem occidere*, I was so great a saint in my own esteem, that I was ready to slay all if I could ; and this he did out of a blind zeal. The pride of men's hearts, together with their blind zeal, cause persons to exalt themselves, and strive to make the doctrine and life of others odious to the people, altho' they are such as God has given his *Urim* and *Thummim* to. While persons are contending about words, and distracting their hearers with things that concern not their salvation, and endeavouring to beget a prejudice in their hearts against Godly ministers, they in the meantime neglect to preach down heresies and false doctrines, that strike at the principles of faith, and welfare of immortal souls. Surely all those that are begotten from the dead unto a lively hope by Christ Jesus, will love all those that are made partakers of the same life, and will not cease daily to mourn for their deficiency therein.

6. *Infer.* Is Christ a believer's life, and such a life as you have heard ? then what a misera-

ble state is a Christless soul in ! A state of darkness while they live, a state of misery when they die ; the cup of wrath without mixture, eternal misery will be the portion of the wicked. Oh what a state of blindness and darkness do they live on earth ? and what a state of misery will they be in the other world ? But you may say, how shall I know that Christ is mine ? I shall lay down a few characters ; but I shall,

First, Shew who they are that have not Christ for their life.

Secondly, Who they are that have Christ for their life. I shall begin with the negative.

First, That soul that was never sick unto death for Christ, never yet had Christ for its life ; that soul that never saw himself undone without Christ, that never made Christ his life ; they that never groan under the body of sin and death, that never cried out, Wo is me, I am undone, what shall I do to be saved ? they are dead in trespasses and sins ; they that never saw the sentence of death in themselves, never made Christ their life, 2 Cor. i. 9. *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead.*

When a soul comes to say, Alas, I have gone as far as I can, but I cannot get peace nor comfort by all I do, therefore I must lie down and perish if I have not Christ to be mine ; I have nothing of my own to cover me, I shall be naked ; if I have not this blood to wash me, I shall die in my sins. If you believe not in me, faith

Christ, you shall die in your sins. Better die on a dunghill, better die in a prison, better die in a fiery furnace in Christ, than in a palace out of him. But what remedy shall there be to save us from our sins? Why, Christ doth not set them to work for life, but to believe in him, who is the believing sinner's life. Let a legalist or formalist, they that never were pained at the heart with a sense of their undone state; they that have not Christ for their life; what a deal of difference is between a believer and them, as much as there is between a person that is sick, and another that is dead: He that is dead, if he be laid on the ground, there is all quiet, and lay a weight on him he is quiet; but go and lay your ear at the sick man's bed, and there is groaning and crying, O my head, O my heart! What is it you want? I want breath, I want a physician, I want life. We preach Christ to you poor sinners: What is the reason you do not groan for this Christ? Why? You are dead in your sins: You go away, and it may be some particular things we tell you of, you can repeat them when you go home. Some particular duties you perform, but are your souls awakened? Do you groan for Christ? Do you go home pained at the heart? Was Christ ever your life? Do you cry out, I am dead and undone without Christ be my life? If you were sick at heart, and were pained for Christ, we should hear of you: It may be you go to hear as your fancy leads you, but not with a sense

of your wants. You fancy sometimes this man, sometimes that man, but were your souls ever sick for Christ? Did your hearts ever break within you? Did your souls ever mourn in secret? Lord give me a Christ: I am afraid of this little number, many that are dead, that Christ was never your life. When persons are in a swoon, put spirits or any thing into their nose they do not mind it; but when they come to themselves, they cry out, I am sick, O give me something. Saith our blessed Lord Jesus, John v. 25. "Verily, verily I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." When Christ comes with an effectual call by his Spirit to the heart in the word, it raises up the dead man. If there be a whole family dead, there is not one groan heard; but if one that is alive be sick or in pain, he fills the place with groans. Talk of any thing rather than Christ; any preaching is for some men rather than Christ, that is foolishness to some: Aye, but soul, whether thou wilt have Christ or no, we must preach Christ, and then we can give up our account with joy. It is the whole work of a minister to preach Christ; whatever duties are spiritual, they all flow from Christ; but where Christ is not dwelling in the soul, all they perform is dead and formal. Silent professor, quiet professor, quiet with outward duties, with a form of religion, and so rest until you are undone. If once God calls you, and awakens you by the effectual

working of his Spirit, then your souls will cry out, O give me a Christ! If I have not the blood of Christ I am undone! If I have not the righteousness of Christ I am undone: If I have not the Spirit of Christ I am none of his: And whose are you then? The devil's, Rom. viii. 9. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." There is no middle state, you are the devil's that are not Christ's; you are dead in sin under bondage, if you have not the Spirit of Christ: Be what you will, a professor, a person in communion, or out of communion, be ye rich or poor, a person of gifts, a person that can hear, read and pray, if you have not the Spirit of Christ, you are none of his. When the dead persons were raised up by Christ, something was called for them to eat. O, saith the soul, when he is awakened by grace, give me a Christ or I perish. O that I had a cordial of his blood! I want his blood, I want his righteousness, his promises; they shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live.

It is called a vivification. We are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, in our deliverance from them we are said to be quickened, Eph. v. 5. "Though dead, we hear the voice of the Son of God and live, being made alive unto God through Jesus Christ," Rom. vi. 11. Now no such works can be wrought in us, but by an effectual communication of a principle of spiritual life, and nothing will deliver us. Some think to evade the power of this argument, by saying, that all these expressions are

metaphorical, and arguing from them are but fulsome metaphors ; and it is well if the whole gospel be not a metaphor to them : But if there be not an impotency in us by nature unto all acts of spiritual life, like that which is in a dead man unto the act of life natural, if there be not a like power of God required unto our deliverance from their condition, and they work in us a principle of spiritual obedience, as it is required unto the raising of him that is dead. They may as well say that the scripture speaks not truly, as that it speaks metaphorically, and that the Almighty power, the exceeding greatness of God's power that is put forth, are exercised herein, Eph. i. 18—Col. ii. 12, 13—2 Thess. i. 11—2 Pet. i. 3. And what do these men intend by this quickening, this raising from the dead by the power of God ? A persuasion of our minds by rational motives taken from the word, and the things contained in it. But was there ever heard of such a monstrous expression ? If there be nothing else in it, what could the holy writers intend, by calling such a work as this, a quickening of them who were dead in trespasses and sins through the mighty power of God, unless it were by a noise and insignificant words to draw us off from a right understanding of what is intended, and it is well if some are not of that mind.

Dr. Owen on the Spirit, p. 279.

Do you hear the voice of Christ continually in the word preached ? but you must hear a-

nother voice, or you are undone for ever. If the voice of the ministration of the word, without the power of the Spirit, would awaken men, there would be fewer in hell, and more in heaven than there are. This is the external means; but yet there must be the pouring out of the Spirit, or else this will do no good.

And here I shall shew how the Spirit of God works on the heart.

First, The Spirit of God works effectually, that is, the voice of the Son of God. How long may we preach the resurrection of the dead to a dead man before he rises? but that resurrection that is preached when Christ comes with the sound of the trumpet, and saith, ye dead arise; presently the dead arise. We may come and sound the trumpet in the ears of sinners, but they will not hearken, till Christ come by the effectual working of his Holy Spirit; then it works indeed, Acts xvi. 14. Speaking of Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened, and then she attended to the things of the kingdom of God, *And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul.* She attended as one whose heart was opened, and was sick for Christ, and rejoiced to hear Christ preached.

Secondly, The Spirit of God comes and persuades the heart to close with Christ. Saith a sick person, I am persuaded if I could but have

such a physician I should be cured, healed of my sickness : so poor souls lie complaining, but not in despair ; they are sick unto death, but yet shall not die ; they see themselves lost without Christ, yet shall not die for want of Christ : the Spirit persuades them to embrace Christ, John vi. 45. *It is written, they shall be taught of God ; every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* It is written in the prophets, they shall be all taught of God : Is this to leave off all teaching ? No, they shall be all taught of God : how ? Why, God shall teach them by the power of his Spirit in the word : and how then ? “ Every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me : ” God teacheth them by the word, and the Spirit persuades them there is life in Christ : the soul is persuaded to close with Christ ; for the soul that is sick for Christ shall never die. Saith Christ, *he that believeth on me shall never die.* But the sick sinner is persuaded that Christ can heal him, and will heal him ; he groans, but not in despair ; he sighs, but not as a person that is out of hopes, but does believe that Jesus Christ will be his salvation, and is his life ; he shall hear the voice of the Son of God : the preaching of the word is the means, but it must be the Spirit of God that must work and make it effectual ; and then the soul makes no delay, no consideration of this or that, but closes with Christ as a dying person closes with a medicine that may cure him.

Thirdly, The voice of Christ is a voice that

ingrafts itself with power in the heart. The apostle saith, Jam. i. 21. *Receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.* They are persuaded that Jesus Christ is their life, the promises of Christ are become theirs; though they are sick of love to Christ, they shall not die for want of Christ. Ask believers what it is they want; they will tell you, they want more strength from Christ, more knowledge of Christ, more communion with Christ: now they that have not had these symptoms of life, lie yet in the grave of sin, and the worm of conscience feeds on them, and they feel it not: millions feel not the worm of conscience till they come to hell. Saith Christ, *I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. The whole need no physician, but they that are sick.* The second character of such that never made Christ their life, are those that never see themselves poor and undone without Christ. "Thou sayest thou art rich, and increased in goods, and hast need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," Rev. iii. 17. What, without Christ, and not cry out, thou art poor, miserable, and undone! They that never see themselves poor, miserable, and undone, are yet without Christ. What, without Christ, and well enough! What hath enriched you? Need of nothing! What, are you well enough without Christ? Thou sayest, I am increased: What, can you patch up with any duties, with any hopes, with any thing below Christ? But, saith

Christ, thou art poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked. 3dly, They never made Christ their life, that never prized that glorious gospel that brings them tidings of this life. If a man be sick unto death, as he thinks, bring him tidings of life, it is the best news he can hear of; bring him tidings that his will is made, his estate is settled very well; but how is it with you? I am a dead man: O sir, but I have brought one with me, that saith, he can certainly cure you: This is the best news, saith he that you have brought me; So is Jesus Christ come to save poor sinners, of whom I am the chief, saith a poor soul. This is a saying worthy of all acceptation. They that do not prize the gospel, and find it the sweetest thing in the world, yet have not Christ for their life: There is that in nature that persons must be doing something, that they may obtain blessedness. The Israelites stript themselves for to make them a god: So do formal professors, they will be at much cost and charge for an outward profession, and then fall down and adore their own doing; but to prize this gospel, that brings them news of a Redeemer, it is very rare to find one among many. But now the soul that longs for Christ, is sick for Christ, rejoices to hear these glad tidings. Saith Paul, 1 Tim. i. 15. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." It is the best news that ever I heard: If the gospel is not joyful news to you, if it doth not affect

you, you never had Christ. When a soul comes to close with Christ, he saith, And is there hope for me, and did Christ die for me? And did Christ come to be life for me? O welcome news, the best that ever I heard in my life! 2 Tim. i. 10. "But now is made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Life is brought through the gospel: What life! Immortal life, immortal grace, immortal salvation, to a poor undone sinner. If this gospel is not prized, but as a thing indifferent, as many make their calling and business their main end; but the gospel is a thing they can best spare; such never made Christ their life. In ver. 9. the Apostle saith, "Christ hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began, who hath abolished death." The death of immortal souls under the curse of the law and wrath of God. Christ takes death away: And what hath he brought? Life and immortality to light through the gospel: Were you but sensible of the worth of this life, how would you love the wells of salvation, from whence is drawn the water of life? Love the pot that holds the manna that preserves this life? Love the messenger that brings you tidings, you shall live and not die: How would a condemned malefactor love that person that should bring him a pardon; yea, the messenger that

should bring him news of it? So it is with the condemned sinner, the sentence is passed, he that believes not is damned. O what joy is it to hear of salvation by Christ, when the sinner hath the sense of his misery! This immortal life comes through the gospel: When a sermon of Christ is preached, news from heaven is brought to sinners; and what news is it? O, that there is mercy and pardon for poor sinners! Saith the believing soul, shall my soul live, is Christ become my salvation? O what blessed gospel is this! What precious news is this! Now soul, do you look on the gospel glad tidings, and the feet of them that bring it beautiful? If not, be sure Christ is not your life.

Fourthly, They never had Christ for their life that live in themselves, that center in themselves, on themselves, and not above themselves: As thus, Take a dead man, and wrap him up in silk and silver, with the best perfumes you can, it centers all in putrefaction, rottenness, and death; all the sweet smells and perfumes will not keep him from corruption. But take a living man, he lives on something to preserve life: It would be improper to say a man lives on nothing; a living man must have something to subsist with. A dead sinner centers in himself, what duty he performs he takes to be his life. But a soul in Christ lives on Christ, and not on his performances, though he performs duty. So much for the negative, now follows the affirmative. What are the characters of them that have Christ their life?

First, If Christ is your life, you will love the word of God, and look upon it to be very precious, that hath been the means of begetting and nourishing this life in you; *As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,*" 1 Pet. ii. 2. If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, you will love the food that the Lord gives you. The Prodigal, when he returned home to his father's house, then he thought his food precious. The word of Christ is that which is very precious to the soul; if you do not taste that the Lord is gracious, you can never fall in love with Christ: There may be some convictions under the word, but they will wear off again; there may be something that may delight, but souls that Christ is their life, they come to relish the inward sweetness and power of the word of Christ, if you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

First, They will long for it.

Secondly, They will make it their meat and drink.

First, They will long for it. If a child be crying for the breast, if you give it a rattle, or any other thing, it will not please it, or still it without the breast: It is not any thing of this world, nor the glory of it, will still a believer without Christ, Psal. lxxxiv. See how the Psalmist praises the courts of God, how lovely it is. *One day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.* Why, would you be a door-keeper in the house of

God? Truly there beggars fare well: Hungry souls would be first in, and last out, they would be served more than once. Saith a longing soul, I would not have a word drop before I come that I may lose nothing; I would be one of the first in and last out; I would not have a word drop nor a crumb fall, I would hear all that is spoken of Christ: How sweet is every word of Christ! "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. More are they to be desired than gold, yea than much fine gold; sweeter than honey or the honey-comb," Psal. xix. and saith Job, *I prize thy word more than my necessary food.* Soul, thou that longest for the word of Christ, certainly thou art alive in Christ, surely thou that longest for the food of Christ, livest on Christ. I believe there are many poor doubting souls among you. If you were asked, when you are an hungered, if you were invited to a great feast, would you not leave that to go and hear Christ preached, would you not leave your meal to hear Christ's precious word? Saith Job, Chap. xxiii. 12. *I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.* Then if thy soul longs for the word of grace, it is a sign that your souls are made alive by Christ. Whoever can say of the word of Christ, my soul longs for it, I long for the courts of God, I long for the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, I long for the pot of manna, that I may taste of the golden manna; I long for the day when manna comes down from heaven; if it is so, I say, from God's

word, though you may have many castings down, your souls are made alive by Christ, and he is become your salvation. A saint makes religion his meat and drink. It is one thing to be waiting on God in ordinances, and another to make it your meat and drink. An hypocrite may perform many things, and be large in duty, and yet not make it his meat and drink. John iv. 31, 32. "His disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat: But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that you know not of." His meat was to do his Father's will: The word of Christ, his ordinances and duties are meat and drink to the believer; I have life that you do not know of, I have meat and drink that you do not know of, I live in doing my Father's will. Saith a believer, I live on Christ and his word, and of all mercies I enjoy nothing so sweet to me as Christ and his word, who is better to me than all outward mercies: If it be so with you, you may take comfort in this, that Christ is become your life; where the word of grace and means of grace is become as meat and drink to your souls.

Secondly, A soul that lives Christ, and hath made Christ his life, he lives above the world: He may have some fears and doubts: But it is the desire of a saint to live above the things of the world, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your affections on things above, and not on things on the

earth," Col. iii. 1, 2. When I was in my natural state, saith a believer, when the world went well with me, I was mightily content; but now I am risen with Christ, made alive with Christ, now my heart is set on seeking things above; had I but communion with Christ, could I but walk with Christ, live upon Christ, let the world go which way it will, though I have many fears and discouragements, when I have communion with Christ, my heart is above them all. O my soul, what a good day it is when thou canst enjoy communion with Christ? The believer lives above: Though many times a soul hath his gloomy days in the world, when fears surround his faith; but he gets above it again.

When they look above, where their glory and comfort is: *Set your affections on things above, and not on things below.* There is an exhortation and dehortation. *Set your affections on things above*, there is the exhortation; *and not on things below*, there is the dehortation. Christians are often forbid, that they should not love the world, and commanded positively that they should set their hearts on things above. Though a believer is many times complaining, that his heart is too much on this present world; but, saith a believer, I desire my heart may be above. O that it might never be below again! O were it my duty, I would wish to be always in the house of God. Therefore when your heart is carried up above the world, you have an interest in a better life than this below.

Thirdly, To perform duty, and to live on Christ above all duties, is another character of one that makes Christ his life. They are carried up above duty; they pray, and yet live on Christ by faith; they hear, yet live on Christ for righteousness. Paul was a man prizing duty, and loving duty as much as any saint; preaching all night, praying night and day, preaching in season and out of season; he was much in praying and fasting, yet, saith he, *I count all my own righteousness but dung and dross without Christ*. It is rare wisdom to be a student in the knowledge of Christ. An exact walking christian, and yet to live above duty upon Christ. For one to neglect duty, and yet profess Christ, that is a delusion: To profess Christ, and live upon any thing below Christ, is confusion; but to walk circumspectly in our duty, and yet to live above all upon Christ, is a character of a true believer.

Fourthly, If Christ is become your life, you will be diligent under all means of grace, under those means where life is begotten and preserved. The impotent folks lay at the pool of Bethesda, waiting for the moving of the waters; if ever they had healing it must be there. A soul must be diligent about Christ's table, where crumbs fall to feed their souls, Luke v. 5. "And Simon answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night and have taken nothing, nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net." A diligent waiting at wisdom's gate, a diligent hearkening when Christ

will speak peace. We will hear what the Lord will speak, are the words of gracious souls.

Fifthly, They that have Christ their life, Christ is very precious unto them. O how precious is a man's life! The devil could tell God, *Behold, skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life.* A man would give any thing for his life: So a believer would give any thing for a Christ. The devil appears before God, What, is Job alive? Though he is robbed of all, thou hast spared his life; a man will give all that he hath for his life. Saith Paul, *I count all but dung and dross that I may win Christ*; convinced sinners will do any thing for a Christ, part with any thing, that they might but know Christ to be theirs. When a man is set on by thieves, saith he, take all, so you save my life, Job ii. 4. "And Satan answered the Lord and said, skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for his life." If Job had a thousand treasures, all that he had should go for his life. How willingly doth the mariner unlade his ship, and cast all his rich wares overboard, that he may preserve that precious jewel, his life? A man will give skin upon skin, gold upon gold, treasure upon treasure, that he may save his own life. Let life be at stake, and a man will give all the things he hath in the world for it, and think he hath a good bargain. Life is the most precious, the most excellent thing in nature. Esther's speech to the king in her petition, imports, that all other losses might have been borne, but the loss of life: She

thought liberty not worth the asking for, compared with life. Mr. Caril on Job.

A christian values Christ above all things, Phil. iii. 7. "What was gain to me I count loss, that I may have Christ; I count all but dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ;" For Christ is precious, his love is precious, his offices precious, his person precious, his promises are precious. I would give all, so I might have Christ to be mine: When Christ is your life, you will prize him above all. O let me have Christ, know Christ, that is the sum of my life. The spouse told the daughters, *He was the chief among ten thousand.* Did you ever see Christ precious? Is his blood precious? Do you long for his righteousness? 2 Pet. ii. 7. *To them that believe he is precious.*

Sixthly, If Christ is your life, you will study Christ more and more. Many, we say, are their own physicians, they will study physic, that they may be their own doctors, and know how to apply medicines to themselves. Those souls that know Christ to be their life, they will study to know Christ more, that they may have a remedy for every disease of their souls ready at hand, and not to be strangers to that grace and mercy that helps in time of need.

I shall now come to wind up with a word of exhortation. Is it so, that the life of a believer is such a glorious life? O then, you Christless souls, cry day and night till Christ is become your life; it is a life above all lives; if once

you come to live Christ, you will say with David, "One day in thy courts is better than a thousand ; and I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." I would rather enjoy one moment's time with Christ, than all the pleasures of the world : It is a life above all lives. The happiness of this world is mixt with sorrow : You have your dead flies in your sweet ointment : The best of your outward mercies are mingled with trials, troubles and fears ; and when you have gain you are afraid of losing it : When you have great mercies, you have great care comes with it : But to live Christ, it is a pure life. It is said of wisdom, "all her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are paths of peace." Now, the soul that lives on Christ, what a sweet life, what a pure life, what a glorious life does he live ! But, saith the sinner, what shall I do ? Ah, sinner, Christ hath done all, that thou mayest have all given freely ; for in thy doing thou mayest be undone. But what may you do to make Christ your life ? Nothing that we do can move God to give Christ : If we think we deserve any thing at God's hand for our doings, it is the way to be undone : But though we cannot work for life, we are taught to beg for mercy ; God will be enquired for those things he freely gives.

First, Go to God, and beg of him to convince thee of the necessity of Christ : Go and tell the Lord what an undone and miserable wretch thou art ; thou art poor and canst not

see it: Cry, Lord, I am poor, I am blind and miserable: O Lord, convince me what need I have of Christ Jesus! Beg of God to open thy eyes to see the worth and want of Christ.

Secondly, Beg the Lord to awaken thy soul, to see how suitable Christ is to thy soul: If the Lord would speak from heaven this day, and say to an awakened sinner, what wilt thou have, sinner? Riches and honours? Wilt thou have long life? The sinner awakened would answer, No, Lord, that is not suitable, give me thyself, or I am undone; Oh how suitable is Christ to an undone soul.

Thirdly, Beg God to persuade thy heart how ready and willing Christ is to entertain thee; when all is done, you will sink under your burden, if you do not believe the willingness and readiness of Christ to receive you. Ah, poor sinner, thou canst not long more for life and salvation, than Christ longs to save thee. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," John vi. 37.

Fourthly, What can you do, sinner? Nothing to work in any way to purchase the favour of God; but this you may do, wait upon the means of grace, wait at wisdom's gate: You do not know, sinner, how soon it may be your call, how soon Christ may come, and you may hear the voice of the Son of God. Tho' a carnal, natural man can do nothing in matter of his salvation, he may wait on God in the

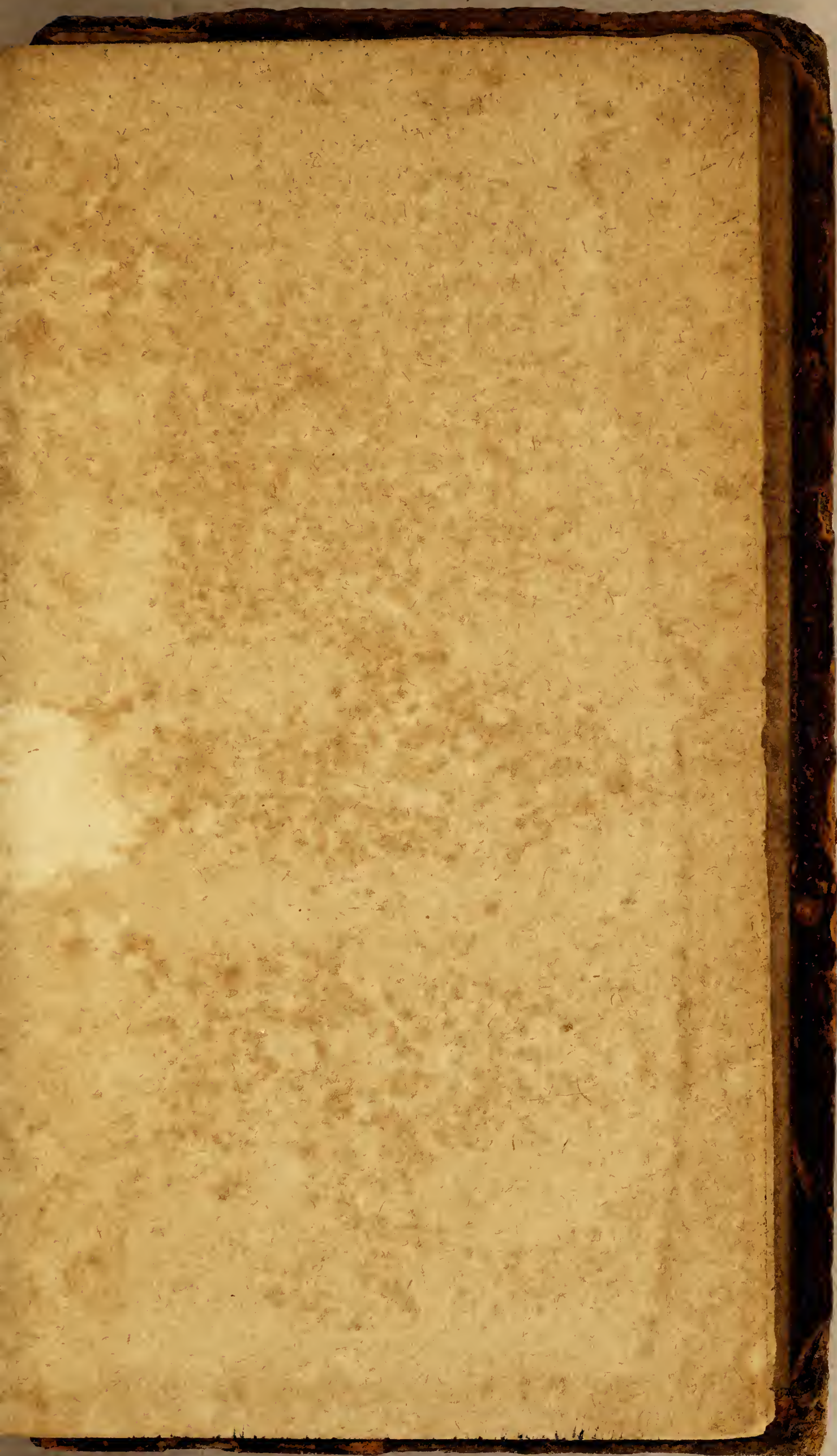
way of his divine appointments. Though Zaccheus was a carnal publican, he could get up into the sycamore-tree to see Christ. A poor carnal heart may come, wait and hear, and be at wisdom's gate: Come, get into the sycamore-tree, and it may please the Lord to speak a word to thee this day, or next day, salvation may come to thy house, to thy soul. May not we liken many persons that come to hear the gospel, to Zaccheus's getting up the tree to get a sight of Christ? They come to see and be seen, and think not what they shall meet with; they never see their need of Christ, but Christ comes and calls the soul, awakens it. Sinner, where art thou? Where art thou going, undone sinner? I will become thy salvation, Luke xix. 3. Zaccheus had only a mind to see Christ as other persons had; "And he sought to see Jesus who he was, but could not, for he was low of stature: and he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see Christ. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him." Christ must look upon us first; he saw a poor ignorant man running to see his person, but not to believe in him for salvation. Christ said unto him, *Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.* Come to the ordinances of God, attend there: Then, poor sinner, thou art in the way, tho^o thou hast no interest in Christ, nor never heardst this salvation sounding in thy soul, so as to give thee comfort, tho' thou art looking and beholding there, seeing and hear-

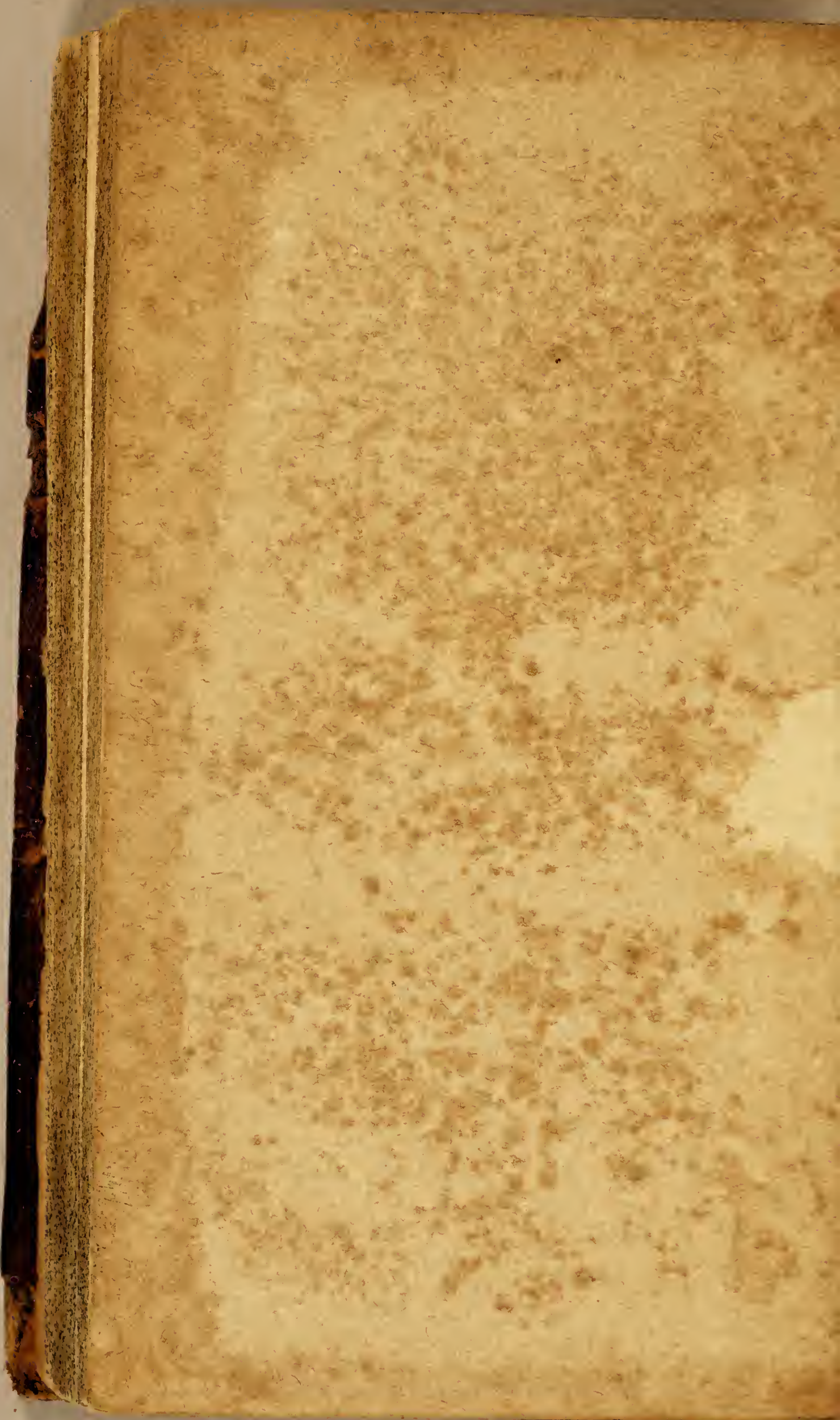
ing out of custom. Jesus said unto him, *Make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.* Make haste, if Christ would give thy poor dark soul a call this day, what haste would you make to close with Christ? There would be no deliberation. Zaccheus delays not, but comes down presently; and the Lord may speak in a word of grace, sinner, this day I will take up my abode in thy heart for ever. O how good it is to be under the means of grace! Tho' many come but to take a nap, as bishop Latimer saith, God may catch thee napping. The Lord may speak to thy soul, This day I will be thy salvation; O what joyful news would it be to a poor dead carnal sinner! If the Lord should this day speak to thee, and say, sinner, I am thy salvation. "And he came down and received him joyfully;" he was the best guest that ever he entertained. If you had asked Zaccheus a little before, when he sat at the receipt of custom, whether he would have parted with any thing for Christ, he would not have hearkened to you; now all shall go for Christ, now, saith he, "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor," I will take vengeance on my iniquity; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. *He came down and received him joyfully;* thou art welcome, if I had a thousand worlds I could part with them all for Christ. Be sure wait at wisdom's gate, you may hear Christ's voice, saying, I am become thy salvation.

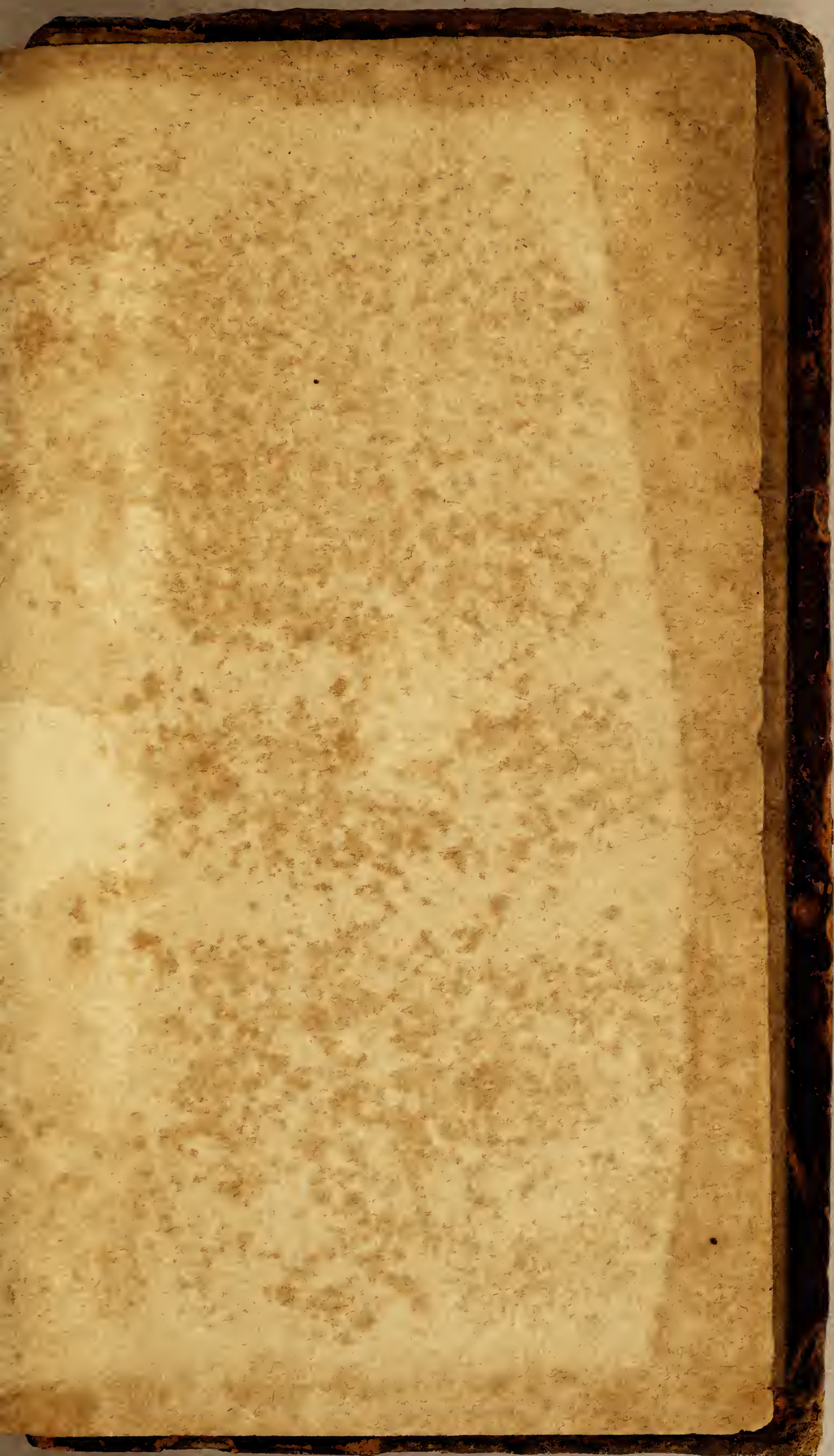
Fifthly, When you are waiting, O send up cries, as the poor blind men did when they heard Christ was coming: You have heard Christ preached this day, can you be still, and not send up one prayer and cry to Christ, Lord, come into my soul? Will you go home with your cold prayers, hearts, affections; and shall Christ stand aloof, and you stand afar from Christ, Mat. xx. 30. *And behold two blind men, sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord thou Son of David; and the multitude rebuked them.* So a soul may say, I have a multitude within me bids me hold my peace; a multitude of unbelieving thoughts tell me it is too late for me to come to Christ; a multitude of temptations never to pray more, a multitude rebuking my soul; but the more they rebuke me, the more I will cry to Christ; the more my unbelieving heart cries, Christ will not save thee, the more I will cry to Christ to save me; the more my temptations bid me I should not pray, I will pray the more; *And they cried, have mercy on us; it was mercy they wanted.* Saith the soul, the more temptations and unbelief besets me, the more I will cry to Christ to remove it; the more I am tempted the more I will pray, the faster I will cleave to Christ. Sinners, send up cries to heaven for Christ and grace, that your souls may live and not die. How would the devil baffle the ignorant souls out of all! He would baffle them out of duties, ordinances and Sabbaths; But a

believer will not be baffled by him ; and though the devil, the world, and his own heart oppose him, he saith, I will make my prayer to the God of my life, let them say what they will. Therefore let me beg of you to set your resolution to cry to the Lord, and resolve that you will not be put off without Jesus Christ, that you may not die in your sins, and so perish for ever ; for the wages of sin is eternal death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.*

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